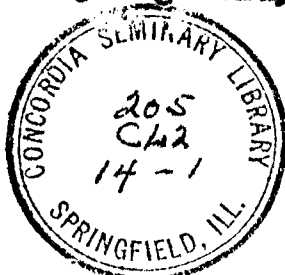


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MOTTO: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding aught of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

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NUMBER 1

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● Foreword

Before our mind's eye arise men who love the Lord Jesus and His Word and trust in the saving power of His blood and who cannot see why anybody will champion aloofness from people that, professing to be Christians, disagree with him in one or the other doctrine of the Holy Scriptures. Among those who find such aloofness reprehensible are men that enthusiastically exalt the glories of the Lutheran Church and would give their life for its victory. What the latter in particular cannot understand is how a Lutheran can be so insistent on the correctness of his own be-

liefs as to refuse fellowship to other Lutherans who differ with him concerning certain doctrines of the Bible

Loyalty to the Lutheran teachings forbids us to have fellowship with those who oppose these teachings, we say. And we add that naturally this principle holds whether those who oppose these teachings call themselves Lutherans or by some other name. Certainly an error does not lose its character if it is transferred from one camp to another. Labels do not affect the nature of an article; thistles are thistles whether they grow in the neighbor's garden or in our own. . . .

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Our concern is with those earnest people, many of them Lutherans, who wish to be loyal to everything that God has said, who furthermore accept the Scriptures as the inerrant Word of God, but who do not see that this attitude of theirs compels them to separate from those who do not manifest such loyalty. Among the arguments advanced by those critics the following loom prominent: that the strict anti-unionistic course sponsored by the Synodical Conference rests on a misunderstanding of Scripture-passages; that the law of love and forbearance, often expressed in the Word of God, makes it clear that an unbending confessionalism is not in keeping with the divine will; and that this sort of confessionalism is one of the factors hindering the progress of the Church. . . .

When the frequent charge that we in this matter misunderstand the Scriptures is elaborated, it is usually our appeal to Rom. 16, 17; Titus 3, 10; II John 10f.; and I Tim. 6, 3-5 which is attacked. These passages, so it is asserted, do not speak of errorists who can still be regarded as Christians, but of people that have abandoned the Christian faith, if they ever did believe; and hence these words do not bear on the question whether Christians of churches opposing each other can practice fellowship. In reply we say that it is a pity when a matter which is simple is made complicated. The passages under discussion speak of people that are division-makers, of persons not "bringing" or proclaiming the apostolic doctrine, "teaching otherwise and not consenting to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ." The injunction, expressed or implied, is that people of this kind must be avoided, which certainly means that we must not have religious fellowship with them.

It will be noted that unapostolic teaching and the causing of divisions are the factors mentioned as so grave and perilous as to necessitate separation from those promoting them. Nothing is said about an examination into the spiritual condition of these persons and a conciliatory procedure toward them if it becomes evident that they have not yet lapsed into total unbelief. Whether they are still Christians or not is irrelevant. The Apostle, it is true, speaks of their spiritual state in terms of severe reproach. But it is not their spiritual state which makes them a great menace, but their activity, their making of divisions, their disrupting the Church through false doctrine or something else that is sinful, for instance, the nursing of an iniquitous ambition. If a teacher is guilty of spreading unapostolic teaching and thereby disrupting the Church, if he is in some other sinful way destroying the peace and unity in one or more congregations, then he must be avoided. The Church cannot permit anybody to divide its members into warring camps, be he a believer in Christ or not. . . .

Let no one studying the subject overlook the class of Bible-texts in which the Lord teaches us to be and remain faithful to everything that His Word contains. Let him ponder whether the well-known words of Jesus, "If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," John 8,

31,32, and "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you," Mt. 28,20, and the equally well-known words of St. Paul, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness," II Tim. 3, 16, do not imply that we avoid having religious fellowship with those who fail to accept everything the Scriptures teach?

Love does not dictate indifference toward error; on the contrary, it demands that errors and imperfections be pointed out. The attitude which condones deviations from the truth and wrongdoing is not an evidence of love but of pseudo-love. Whoever loves his neighbor wishes to see him lay aside the errors which are still afflicting him and there is no more effective way of protesting against them than that of withholding the hand of fellowship. . . . Let us beware of permitting the evil of iniquitous laxity to enter our ranks as it approaches us disguised in the garb of Christian patience and charity.

That strict confessionalism will never become popular we admit at once. If anybody thinks that the Church, in order to succeed, must have a message which will meet with universal acclaim, then the preaching which is based on strict confessionalism is not what he is looking for. But to spread a message which all will accept is not identical with promoting the true progress of the Church.

We, then, refuse to plead guilty to the charges of some earnest Christians which we have looked at, but rather urge our critics to re-examine the whole subject in the light of the Holy Scriptures. Our hope is that through renewed prayerful study they likewise will arrive at the conviction that what we must strive for is not the creation of so broad a platform that everybody can stand on it, but manifestation of that loyalty which places itself on the rock of the Holy Scriptures and, while trying earnestly to bring everybody else to stand on that same foundation, will not surrender one inch of it.

From the Foreword to the *Concordia Theological Monthly*, January, 1941, by W. Arndt.

❶ Ignorance and Indifference

By DR. EDW. W. A. KOEHLER

Ignorance begets indifference. It is largely due to a general lack of accurate

knowledge of the Scripture doctrines that the spirit of indifference and unionism was able to gain so many adherents. Let us diligently study the Catechism; let us faithfully teach our children; let us indoctrinate our young people, so that, firmly rooted and grounded in the knowledge of God's Word, they may stand unshaken in the tide of indifferentism that in these latter days is sweeping over the Church.

(In "Foreword" to *A Short Explanation of Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism with Additional Notes for Students, Teachers, and Pastors.*)

❷ Refusing to Compromise the Truth

When a theologian is asked to yield and make concessions in order that peace may at last be established in the Church, but refuses to do so even in a single point of doctrine, such an action looks to human reason like intolerable stubbornness, yea, like downright malice. That is the reason why such theologians are loved and praised by few men during their lifetime. Most men rather revile them as disturbers of the peace, yea, as destroyers of the kingdom of God. They are regarded as men worthy of contempt. But in the end it becomes manifest that this very determined inexorable tenacity in clinging to the pure teaching of the divine Word by no means tears down the Church; on the contrary, it is just this which, in the midst of greatest dissension, builds up the Church and ultimately brings about genuine peace. Therefore, woe to the Church which has no men of this stripe, men who stand as watchmen on the walls of Zion, sound the alarm whenever a foe threatens to rush the walls, and rally to the banner of Jesus Christ for a holy war.

Try and picture to yourselves what would have happened if Athanasius had made a slight concession in the doctrine of the deity of Christ. He could have made a compromise with the Arians and put his conscience at ease; for the Arians declared that they, too, believed Christ to be God, only not from eternity. They said . . . there was a time when He did not exist, meaning He had become God. But they added: "Nevertheless He is to be worshiped, for He is God." Even at that remote time, had Athanasius yielded, the Church would have been hurled from the one Rock on which it is founded, which is none other than Jesus Christ.

Again, imagine what would have happened if Augustine had made a slight concession in the doctrine of man's free will, or rather of the utter incapacity of man for matters spiritual. He, too, could have made a compromise with the Pelagians and put his conscience at ease because the Pelagians declared: "Yes, indeed; without the aid of God's grace no man can be saved." But by the grace of God they meant the divine gift which is imparted to every man. Even at that time, had Augustine yielded, the Church would have lost the core of the Gospel. There would have been nothing left of it but the empty, hollow shell. Aye, the Church would have retained nothing but the name of the Gospel. For the doctrine of the Gospel that man is made righteous in the sight of God and saved by nothing but the pure grace of God, through the merits of Jesus Christ, is, as everybody knows, the most important doctrine, the marrow and substance of Christian teaching. Wherever this doctrine is not proclaimed, there is no Christ, no Gospel, no salvation, there men perish, and for such people it has been in vain that the Son of God has come into the world.

Lastly, picture to yourselves what would have happened if Luther would have made a slight concession in the doctrine of the Holy Supper. At the time of the Marburg Colloquy he could have made a compromise with Zwingli and put his conscience at ease, because the Zwinglians said: "We, too, believe in a certain presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper, but not in the presence of Christ's corporeal substance, because God does not set up such sublime, incomprehensible things for us to believe." By this claim Zwingli made Christianity in its entirety a questionable matter, and even Melancthon, who was usually greatly inclined to make concessions, declared that Zwingli had relapsed into paganism. Had Luther yielded, the Church would have become a prey to rationalism, which places man's reason above the plain Word of God.

Let us, therefore, bless all the faithful champions who have fought for every point of Christian doctrine, unconcerned about the favor of men and disregarding their threatenings. Their ignominy, though it often was great, has not been borne in vain. Men cursed them, but they continued bearing their testimony until death, and now they wear the crown of glory and enjoy the blissful communion of Christ and of all the angels

and the elect. Their labor and their fierce battling has not been in vain; for even, after 1500 years, or, in the last-named case, after several centuries, the Church is reaping what they sowed.

Let us, then, my friends, likewise hold fast the treasure of the pure doctrine. Do not consider it strange if on that account you must hear reproach the same as they did. Consider that the word of Sirach, chap. 4,33: "Even unto death fight for justice, and God will overthrow thy enemies for thee," will come true in our case, too. Let this be your slogan: Fight unto death in behalf of the truth, and the Lord will fight for you.

The Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel, by Dr. C. F. W. Walther, Tr., by W. H. T. Dau, pp. 28-30..

✪ Breaking the Chain

"When the devil has succeeded in bringing matters so far that we surrender *one* article (of faith) to him, he is victorious . . . Afterward he can unsettle and withdraw others because they are all intertwined and bound together like a golden chain. If one link is broken, the whole chain is broken and it pulls apart."

LUTHER.

✪ Missouri at the Crossroads

By the Authors of Memorial 609

A. A. BRAUER,
PAUL H. BURGDOFF,
THEO. DIERKS, AND
A. T. KRETZMANN

In Reply to "A Report to the Praesidium of The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod from The Advisory Committee on Doctrine and Practice, August 15, 1951," Released Synodwide as "Report of the Praesidium" by President Behnken, Jan. 25, 1952.

I. IS IT UN-SCRIPTURAL "TO SPEAK OF A VISIBLE SIDE OF THE CHURCH WHEN DEFINING ITS ESSENCE, IF BY THIS VISIBLE SIDE NOTHING ELSE IS MEANT THAN THE USE OF THE MEANS OF GRACE"?

Next to the doctrine of Justification the doctrine concerning the Church is one of the most important teachings of the Bible. The intimate relation between these two doctrines is shown by the *Brief Statement*, par. 24, when it defines the members of the Church as those "in whom the Holy Ghost has wrought faith in the Gospel, or — which is the same thing — in the doctrine of justification."

The Church: "The Whole Number of Believers in Christ"

In this doctrine the chief and deciding question is: "*What is the Church?*" According to our synodical Catechism the Church is "the whole number of believers in Christ" — no more and no less. No more: for no unbeliever or unconverted and unregenerate person is a member of the Church, even though he may stand in an external relationship with the Church and may even hold office in an ecclesiastical organization. No less: for *all* believers throughout the world are members of the Church, whether they be found within the visible external fellowship of orthodox Christians, or among the sects, even in the Roman Catholic Church.

In upholding this Scriptural doctrine of the Church the founding fathers of the Missouri Synod soon became involved in a public controversy with modernistic Lutherans both in Europe and America. "The controversy regarding the Church," says Dr. Walther, "does not concern itself with insignificant and indifferent matters, where one may calmly let every one teach and believe as he chooses. But it concerns a matter, where one who believes falsely can easily be robbed of his whole faith and thereby of his soul's salvation." (*Lutheraner*, 1856, p. 81). In this controversy the founding fathers had to oppose not only the false idea that the Church is visible, but also the false idea that the Church is visible and invisible at the same time, or that it has a "visible side."

Today this same issue has become a matter of controversy *within* the Missouri Synod.

Missouri's Historic Scriptural Position

Missouri's historic Scriptural position was laid down by Dr. Walther in Volume I of *Der Lutheraner*: "The Church is not a visible institution, like a state, but an *invisible kingdom*, a spiritual edifice erected in the hearts of men by the Spirit of God. For thus Christ speaks of His Church: 'My kingdom is not of this world,' John 18:36. 'The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo, here! or, lo there! for behold the kingdom of God is *within* you,' Luke 17:20, 21. From this it is indisputable, *that the true Church is in reality not visible*. It cannot be otherwise, for only the true believing, regenerate Christians are members of the Church. Hence no one can say: these or those people are the Church. Every one should and can indeed become certain, as far

as he himself is concerned, that he is in Christ and that Christ is in him. But no one can be absolutely certain about any *other* person, whether he is a child of God; whether he, therefore, is a living stone in the spiritual house of God, or the Church." (P. 83.)

The Roman Doctrine of the Church

Over against this Scriptural doctrine the Roman Church holds that the holy Christian Church is that external, visible society or organization which embraces all those (be they pious or impious) who have received Christian Baptism, profess the Roman Catholic faith, and are subject to their own bishop and in a special manner to the pope of Rome. The Roman theologian Bellarmine contends that the Church is "a company of men so visible and palpable as is that of the Roman people or the kingdom of Gaul or the republic of Venice." He defines the Church as "the company of men who are joined in the profession of the same Christian faith and in *mutual participation of the same sacraments*."

This conception of the Church is expressly rejected by the Apology in the words: "The Christian Church consists not only in fellowship of outward signs, but it consists especially in inward communion of eternal blessings in the heart, as of the Holy Ghost, of faith, of the fear and love of God." (*Triglotta*, p. 227.)

But these words of the Apology have always been used, or rather misused, by Iowan theologians to make it appear as though their peculiar notion that the Church is *visible and invisible at the same time* were in agreement with the Lutheran Confessions. They have contended that the fellowship in outward signs is the visible side of the Church and that the inward communion of the Holy Ghost and of faith is its invisible side.

Furthermore, the Iowans have always contended that *the use of the means of grace must be included when defining the essence of the Church*, when answering the question, *what the Church is*. To put it in plain, simple words, Iowan theologians contend that the Church must be defined, *not* as it is defined in our Catechism, as "the whole number of believers in Christ," but as the whole number of believers in Christ *who use the means of grace*.

The Teaching of Loche and Iowa

Loche's peculiar conception of the Church, which helped to cause a break between him

and the Missouri Synod and finally led to the formation of the Iowa Synod, is laid down in his expression: "The Church is visible and invisible at the same time." (Loeche, *Kirche und Amt*, 1851, p. 11.) This led to the false, un-Scriptural teaching of a "visible side" of the Church.

Reviewing the doctrinal differences between Iowa and Missouri, in 1904, the Iowan Dr. Deindoerfer said: "The congregation of believers is indeed brought about through the holy Gospel and the holy Sacraments and is thereby alone also preserved and increased. Well, then the teaching and preaching of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments must also have a greater meaning for the Church and that of which it consists (*ihren Bestand*) than that, that they are the marks of the Church. The administration and the use of the Word and the Sacraments must then belong to that of which it consists (*Bestand*), the essence of the Church. And thus the Church also has a visible side, according to which it is *visible* to us, because the administration and use of the Word of God and the holy Sacraments is for us something that strikes the eye and the sense. The Iowa Synod has therefore taught and teaches that two sides are to be distinguished in the Church, an inward and an outward (side). Inwardly conceived and regarded, the Church is a communion of faith and of the Holy Ghost. And that is indeed its *principal* side. But it also has an outward side, which it never dare nor can lack on earth: it is also a fellowship of the Word and of the holy Sacraments and as such it is visible. It is therefore *visible and invisible at the same time*. Members of the Church must be believing and must be partakers of the Holy Spirit and of His gifts and operations. But they must also be sharers of, and participate in, the Word of God and the holy Sacraments, without which they cannot be, and remain, believing. The Iowa Synod regards as deficient, the theological presentation of the doctrine of the Church as being *merely* invisible. But it regards this point of the essential visibility of the Church not as part of the doctrine of faith, as long as one otherwise holds to the necessity and efficacy of the Word of God and of the holy Sacraments, as that is done by the Missouri Synod. Our Synod does not accuse the Missouri Synod of heresy because of this difference. But we are accused of heresy by the Missouri Synod because we have taught and teach regarding the Church that it is in-

visible and visible at the same time: according to the one, and indeed the principal side, invisible communion of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and according to the other, visible fellowship of the Word of God and the holy Sacraments. This is an injustice that is done to us." (Quoted in *Lehre und Wehre*, 50, p. 442f.)

Dr. Stoeckhardt on Romanizing Lutherans

To this Dr. Stoeckhardt answered: "One need but hastily glance through Scripture, for example, the letters of St. Paul, and one will immediately perceive that the Apostle, when writing to the churches or congregations of Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, etc., and when speaking to them and of them, has in mind the believing Christians, the elect, holy, and beloved, who live in these localities. The Apology of the Augsburg Confession throughout the seventh article defines the Church as the assembly of saints or as the multitude of those who believe and have the Holy Spirit. The Christian Church is, as the Apostles' Creed says, the Communion of Saints. And nothing more. . . . It is unbiblical, contrary to the Confessions, and downright absurd, if one reckons Word and Sacraments, as Iowa and the Romanizing modern theologians do, unto the essence of the Church, and includes them in the idea (*Begriff*) 'Church.' What kind of strange conclusion is that: because 'the congregation of believers is brought about and preserved and increased through the holy Gospel and the holy Sacraments' therefore 'the administration and the use of the Word and the Sacraments' must 'belong to that of which a Church consists, to the essence of the Church.' For then one must also conceive God, the Triune God, as a constituent part of the Church, for it is God indeed, who through Word and Sacraments effects and preserves faith. Then one must also call God a constituent part of the world. For the world was created by God and is sustained by God. 'Church,' 'congregation,' *ecclesia*, is according to that of which it consists, its essence, an assembly of persons, of people. They are persons, people, and indeed the believing Christians, not things (*sachliche Objekte*) like Word and Sacraments, which constitute the essence of the Church. . . . The Iowan definition is, however not only unbiblical and contrary to the Confessions, but can also become very detrimental to the faith and to the congregation of believers. If the Church is according to its essence at the same time an establishment,

an institution, even the institution for proclaiming the Word and administering the Sacraments, then the thought lies close, that all people who still externally adhere to this institution, also manifestly unbelieving, ungodly people, belong to the Church of Christ. For common sense will always so far assert its right, that it finally cannot imagine under 'Church,' 'congregation,' 'assembly' anything else but a crowd of people. And when one hears that the Church is something more besides the communion of saints, one then reckons unto the essence of the Church also those people who in any manner have anything to do with ecclesiastical institutions. The German state churches have long ago drawn this conclusion. There all those who have been baptized and now and then hear a sermon, or not even that, even manifestly ungodly people, are regarded and treated as true members of the Church. And the result of all this is that what our Confessions emphatically impress upon us is completely forgotten, namely, that all hypocrites and the ungodly, who are perhaps externally mingled with the Church, are not members of the Church, but are members of Satan, and that the contrast between world and Church, between God's kingdom and Satan's kingdom is gradually erased." (*Lehre und Wehre*, 50, p. 443-445.)

The Nature of the Error Involved

Comparing the Free Church with the State Church, or the "People's Church" as he called it, Dr. Reu said at the Lutheran World Convention at Paris in 1935: "Members of the Free Church, according to the Biblical idea of the Church, are only those who regularly use the Word and the Sacrament. This is applicable also to the People's Church, because in it, too, a group develops which does not only belong to it because of baptism and the payment of church taxes, but makes use of the means of grace and often is more sincere in its church membership than many a Free Church. This Church, as Althaus has recalled, if we should have forgotten, is the Communion of Saints." (*The Church and the Social Gospel* by Dr. M. Reu, translated by Dr. O. C. Pannkoek, p. 43f.)

Now it is true, *all believers*, that is, all members of the one holy Christian Church, the Communion of Saints, *use the means of grace*. But *not all* who use the means of grace *are true believers*. Hence when Dr. Reu says of those who "make use of the means of grace" in the People's Church that "this Church is the Communion of Saints,"

then he is following the Romanist Bellarmine in defining the Church as "the company of men who are joined in the profession of the same Christian faith and in mutual participation of the same sacraments."

Closely allied with this thought is the idea that the *mere* use of the means of grace, for example, taking part in some sacramental rite or worship, by itself makes a person a Christian. According to this thoroughly Roman Catholic idea man is saved by something that he himself does and not solely by trusting that in Christ he has full pardon for all his sins. This thought therefore strikes at the very heart of the Christian faith.

Synod's Official Confession on This Matter

In its *Brief Statement* the Missouri Synod confesses: "Since it is by faith in the Gospel alone that men become members of the Christian Church, and since this faith cannot be seen by men, but is known to God alone, 1 Kings 8,39; Acts 1,24; 2 Tim. 2,19, therefore the Christian Church on earth is *invisible*, Luke 17, 20, and will remain invisible till Judgment Day, Col. 3, 3, 4. In our day some Lutherans speak of two sides of the Church, taking the means of grace to be its 'visible side.'" (This, of course, refers to the Iowan theologians.) The *Brief Statement* admits: "It is true, the means of grace are necessarily related to the Church, seeing that the Church is created and preserved through them." But then it expressly *rejects the false teaching concealed and included in the expression of the "visible side" of the Church* by stating: "But the means of grace are not for that reason a part of the Church; for the Church in the proper sense of the word consists only of *believers*, Eph. 2, 19, 20; Acts 5, 14." (Par. 25.)

Could there be a more definite and clearer rejection of speaking of a visible side of the Church when defining its essence, if by this visible side nothing else is meant than the use of the means of grace?

The *Brief Statement* then says something more. It expressly says that the "doctrine of the Church" — and this self-evidently refers to the difference under discussion in the doctrine of the Church — is "not to be included in the number of open questions." (Par. 44.) Iowan theologians have always declared that they regarded the difference in the doctrine of the Church as an "open question," a question not preventing church fellowship. (Cf. Deindoerfer quoted above.) In other words, the *Brief Statement* declares that this differ-

ence is *church-divisive* and that the doctrine of the Church is in this respect "clearly defined in Scripture."

The Declaration of the American Lutheran Church

In 1938, in its *Declaration* the A.L.C. said: "In connection with the doctrine of the Church the question debated was whether it is permissible to speak of a visible side of the Church when defining its essence. We declare that to do so is not a false doctrine if by this visible side nothing else is meant than the use of the means of grace." It furthermore declared, if the Missouri Synod would acknowledge that this point was "not disruptive of church-fellowship," then it would be willing to enter into pulpit and altar fellowship with the Missouri Synod. (*Proceedings*, 1938, p. 223, 226.)

In the face of Par. 44 of the *Brief Statement* Committee 16 of the 1938 convention could hardly accede to this request. It did, however, declare that a "difference in this point need not be divisive of church fellowship." In this connection it referred to a pronouncement of Dr. Walther at the Buffalo Colloquy, in which he laid down the condition under which he was willing to reckon Word and Sacrament "unto the essence of the Church," namely, if the word "essence" be understood in the wider sense of that "without which the Church cannot come into and remain in existence." But Committee 16 *failed to report* that the Iowans within the A.L.C. *had always rejected* that Word and Sacrament are to be included *only* in that sense of the word. It *failed to report* that the Iowans had always included Word and Sacrament as constituent parts of the Church, using the word "essence" in the sense of what a thing consists of what a thing is.

The ACDP Report — 1951

On this matter the Advisory Committee on Doctrine and Practice says: "We agree with Dr. Arndt that this may be called a matter of terminology." (*Report*, p. 12:27.) Again it says: "*The Visible Side of the Church*. We agree with the essay that this is a matter of terminology. There is no false doctrine implied." (P. 38:116, 1.)

The St. Louis resolution of 1938 would only admit that a difference in this point "need not be divisive of church fellowship." (At the Nebraska District in 1939 it was emphasized: "The report does not say that a difference of doctrine is not divisive, but it

says, 'It need not be divisive'.") But the ACDP goes further and declares: "There is no false doctrine implied." Thereby it declares its full agreement with the false position of the A.L.C. *Declaration*: "We declare that to do so," namely, to speak of a visible side of the Church when defining its essence, "is not a false doctrine." (*Proceedings*, 1938, p. 223.)

That teaching because of which, according to Dr. Deindoerfer in 1904, the Iowa Synod was accused of heresy by the Missouri Synod; that teaching which the Missouri Synod in its *Brief Statement* (par. 25 and 44) expressly rejects and of which it expressly says that this difference is not an "open question;" — of that teaching the ACDP now says: "There is no false doctrine implied."

THIS IS CLEARLY A REPUDIATION OF MISSOURI'S HISTORIC SCRIPTURAL CONFESSION OVER AGAINST IOWA'S FALSE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH, AS THAT CONFESSION IS LAID DOWN IN THE BRIEF STATEMENT OF THE DOCTRINAL POSITION OF THE MISSOURI SYNOD.

In contending that this is a "matter of terminology" the ACDP then adds the rather naive remark: "The statement of the A.L.C. refers to the use of the means of grace, not to people. Some of the signers in their clarification call the means of grace visible." (*Report*, p. 12:27.) That the use of the means of grace is visible has of course never been denied by any Missourian. What we do deny is that that visible thing, the use of the means of grace, is a *part of the Church*, its "visible side." With the *Brief Statement* (par. 25) we confess: "But the means of grace are not for that reason a part of the Church; for the Church in the proper sense of the word consists only of *believers*, Eph. 2, 19, 20; Acts 5, 14."

If it be true, as Walther points out, *Lutheraner* I p. 21, that the Church is and remains invisible in spite of the fact that we can see with our eyes *those persons who profess to be believers* (but of whom we cannot know for certain that they actually are true believers), then the use of the means of grace (which we can see or hear) likewise *does not make the Church visible*. (See *Lehre und Wehre*, 53, p. 449.)

Denying the Simple Catechism Truth

Dr. A. L. Graebner has well said: "A visible thing may in a sense have an invisible side, a side hidden from view for the time being. But a visible side of an invisible thing

is nonsensical, a *contradictio in appositio*." (*Theol. Quart.*, VI, 1902, p. 6.)

To contend that the Church has two sides is to teach that the Church consists of the visible fellowship of the Word and Sacraments, in which the invisible side, the Communion of Saints, is hidden for the time being. One may in this connection still teach (as the students of St. Louis seminary are being taught according to President Behnken's Okabena letter) "that the Church, the *Una Sancta*, is invisible since we cannot look into another man's heart." But the one holy Christian Church is then in reality and for all practical purposes regarded as a visible institution and this visible institution is then spoken of as "the visible body of Christ." (See *Lutheran Witness*, 1944, p. 51.) With Rome it is then also held that in this Church the believers are the "living" and the unbelievers are the "dead" members of the body of Christ. This is expressly taught by Dr. Jaroslav Pelikan in the April, 1950, *American Lutheran*: "A body, characteristically, always has both living and dead cells which it carries with it, and at a given moment it is difficult or impossible to distinguish the living from the dead. The Church, the body of Christ, is similarly afflicted. It carries with it both dead and living cells, and the distinction between them is not always clear."

This statement by the St. Louis Seminary professor plainly contradicts such passages as Rom. 8:9 and Eph. 2:2. (See par. 24 of the *Brief Statement* and Question 175 of the new synodical Catechism.) It denies the simple Catechism truth that the holy Christian Church is "the whole number of believers in Christ; for all believers, and *only* believers are members of this Church."

The Fruitful Mother of Many Other Errors

Including the use of the means of grace when defining the essence of the Church leads to confusing the visible and the invisible Church and that confusion is the fruitful mother of many other errors. In Loehe it led to a false doctrine of the Ministry and of Ordination and to a denial of the Christian rights and privileges of Christian congregations and of individual Christians. In him it also led to Chiliasm and Sacramentalism.

Confusing the invisible Church with the visible Church leads away from all that Luther and the Reformation have gained for us. (See volume 13 of *Der Lutheraner*, where Dr. Walther in a long article extending through the whole volume shows the danger

of erring in the doctrine of the Church: it subverts the chief article of justification by faith alone, induces men to depreciate the work of the Reformation and lures men into the Roman Catholic Church; it causes pastors to follow false objectives in their ministry and leads to spiritual tyranny.)

All this explains why the founding fathers of the Missouri Synod contended so earnestly for the preservation of the true Scriptural doctrine concerning the Church in their midst.

II. THE BASIC FAULT OF THE ACDP REPORT ON CHILIASM

The ACDP says: "We are not dealing with the Iowa Synod of 1875. We are trying to deal with the American Lutheran Church of 1950." (*Report*, p. 44:142.)

The Real Situation in the American Lutheran Church

In 1930 the Iowa Synod joined the Ohio Synod and the Buffalo Synod to form the American Lutheran Church. The Ohio Synod always rejected chiliasm. But chiliasm always flourished within the Iowa Synod. The latest pronouncements on chiliasm emanating from the Iowan wing of the A.L.C. are the various editions of Dr. Reu's *Lutheran Dogmatics* and "A Sane Eschatology" read in 1947 by Dr. Matzner of Dubuque before the Iowa District of the A.L.C. The latter essay was "felt to be so valuable, timely, and scholarly that the Iowa District resolved it should be given a wide circulation." It was thereupon published in the *Wartburg Seminary Quarterly*, Sept., 1947.

If the ACDP members had really investigated these sources (two have admitted that they were personally not acquainted with them; the other two have ignored even a second letter of inquiry), they would soon have realized that there is no essential difference between the chiliasm taught by Iowa in 1858 and the chiliasm safeguarded by the *Declaration* and taught within the Iowan wing of the A.L.C. to this day.

Iowa's Chiliasm of 1858

The Iowan theologians *have always rejected* the *coarsest* form of chiliasm which holds that the millennial reign of Christ will be a time of *earthly glory* — "the ungodly being everywhere suppressed." (Madison Theses of 1858 in *Quellen und Documente*, p. 156; Deindoerfer quoted in *Lehre und Wehre*, 1904, p. 495; Reu *Lutheran Dogmatics*, 1945 ed., p. 383.)

But in the beginning all the Iowan pastors, following in the footsteps of Loehe, believed

in what they called a "Biblical chiliasm" and in 1858 they emphasized the "chief points" of their "conception of the Last Things" as follows: "Conversion of the Jews, a personal Antichrist, the coming of Christ to destroy the Antichrist, first resurrection, and the thousand year reign." (Beyer, *Colloquy*, p. 2.) But that same year the Iowa Synod accepted a member who rejected every form of chiliasm. It therefore declared in the following year: "We treat the doctrine of the Last Things as an open question, that is, as one in which there can be differences of opinion without thereby disturbing fellowship." (*Ibid.*, p. 11.) Thus millennialists and anti-millennialists were granted equal rights and *their differences were declared to be non-divisive of church fellowship.*

We noted above that at first Iowa spoke of a "Biblical chiliasm." At that time the Iowans contended that their chiliasm was "drawn from God's plain and clear Word." But Missourians rejected all chiliasm as *contrary to the clear Word of God.* At the Milwaukee Colloquy in 1867 the Iowans therefore changed their mode of presentation. They now contended that an individual should be granted liberty to differ where there had always been a difference of opinion in the Church regarding the *interpretation* of certain Scripture passages. To this Walther, who himself recognized the "interpretation of difficult passages" as belonging to true "open questions" (*Lehre und Wehre*, 14, p. 36), responded: "If you then do not extend this liberty to other dogmas but only to such objects as still lie in the future or are not clearly and plainly revealed in God's Word." (*Colloquy*, p. 80.)

In claiming the right to differ in the interpretation of certain Scripture passages the Iowan chiliasts took the *second step* in safeguarding their "subtle" chiliasm. They no longer claimed clear Scripture for their peculiar chiliastic notions, but contended that these matters *involved difficult Scripture passages on the interpretation of which there could be a difference of opinion.* Thus Reu, *Lutheran Dogmatics*, 1945 ed., p. 382, says: "Not a few of the points discussed in this chapter pertain to the realm of open questions, i.e., questions which need not disrupt church fellowship. These problems, when so termed are not thereby stamped as negligible things, even though they are not of central significance and much less essential than the doctrine of the way of salvation; for they are problems which concern the

proper interpretation of the Word of God, and this is never an irrelevant matter. But the term conveys the idea that on the one hand one may be a member of the Lutheran Church and yet reject the above-given presentation of the preliminary perfection, and that on the other hand he must be recognized as a Lutheran who feels that his conscience is bound by the Scripture texts and therefore defends and upholds the views presented in this chapter."

Missourians have always granted a certain liberty in the interpretation of difficult or obscure Scripture passages, but they have steadfastly refused to tolerate any interpretation of such passages which contradict other clear teachings or statements of Scripture. They therefore rejected the chiliastic notions of the Iowans as un-Scriptural, pointing out that the chiliastic interpretation of such supposedly obscure texts was *contrary to the analogy of faith*, "the clear passages of the Scriptures themselves which set forth the individual doctrines." Thus the *Brief Statement*, par. 42, rejects various typically chiliastic opinions by pointing to *clear passages of Scripture*: "Over against this Scripture clearly teaches . . ."

How the A. L. C. Makes Room for Chiliasm

This brings us to the *third step* in making room for chiliasm. In the *Declaration* the four points are no longer treated as *characteristic features of chiliasm*, but as *so many separate exegetical questions, each of which is to be considered by itself.* This makes it easier to make room for each one of them and thus for all of them. But taken together these four points spell C-H-I-L-I-A-S-M.

The ACDP says: "The signers of Memorial 609 are misleading also when they say that 'the A.L.C. in its *Declaration* puts 'the question concerning the Antichrist, the future conversion of Israel, the resurrection of the martyrs, and the millennial reign of Christ' in the same category.' 'Category?' The heading in the *Declaration* is 'The Doctrine Concerning the Last Things.' This grouping is the historical one when these matters are under discussion and does not carry any false millennial implications here as if coupling the conversion of Israel with chiliasm." (*Report*, p. 17: 50.)

The doctrine concerning the Last Things concerns itself with much more than the four points mentioned. The coupling of these four points is, however, the "historical one" in the *various forms of chiliasm.* (See e.g., Beyer, *Colloquy*, p. 2.) Besides, the *Declaration*,

though treating these points under the general heading "The Doctrine Concerning the Last Things," does place them in a *special* category, namely, in the category of doctrinal differences which it desires to be regarded as not "disruptive of church fellowship." (*Proceedings*, 1938, p. 226.)

Who is actually "misleading" the Church in this matter?

Here we have the *basic fault* of the ACDP report on chiliasm. *It treats each of the four points of the Declaration by itself as though it were a harmless opinion which must not be rejected as false doctrine* "BECAUSE THE SCRIPTURES ARE NOT CLEAR ON THOSE POINTS." (*Report*, p. 33: 100. Our emphasis.)

Agreeing With the Historic Iowan Position

The ACDP says: "We have shown in the treatment of the points above that there is no denial of *clear* Scripture. There is disagreement between some views because the Scriptures are not clear on those points." [*Report*, p. 33: 100. It cannot be definitely decided to which points the ACDP here refers. At the end of this paragraph the ACDP refers only to the doctrine of Antichrist, the conversion of the Jews, the resurrection of the martyrs, and the beginning of the thousand years. But in the preceding paragraph (99e) it refers to points "1-5" of its report. Point 1 refers to the "visible side of the Church." Iowans have always included the difference in the doctrine of the Church among the open, non-church-divisive questions. See *Lehre und Wehre*, 14, v. 108, footnote.] The ACDP then quotes Dr. Pieper's *Christian Dogmatics*, I, p. 93, "Open questions are such questions as inevitably arise in our study of the Scripture *doctrines* (our emphasis) but are not answered by Scripture at all or at least not clearly. And Scripture enjoins us to let them remain open questions. If we presume to answer them and ask men to accept our opinions as divine truth, we would be rejecting those Scripture passages which forbid us to add anything to God's Word (Deut. 4:2; 12:32; 1 Peter 4:11)."

[Here we could add that Dr. Pieper does not in the quoted statement speak of the four (or five) points but reckons among such "open questions" or "theological problems" such questions as "how sin could originate, seeing that all creatures, including all the angels, were originally created 'very good.' Another open question: Is the soul of each individual created by God immediately (crea-

tionism) or mediately through parents (traducianism)?" The ACDP then continues: "According to this statement of Dr. Pieper and an examination of the points above, we conclude that there are questions related to doctrines of the Bible concerning which members of our Church may hold different views and convictions without thereby being compelled to refuse each other church fellowship. . . . All that we say is that the doctrines of the Antichrist, the conversion of the Jews, the resurrection of the martyrs, the beginning of the thousand years, as explained above, are not so clearly revealed in Scripture that we have the right to condemn the views expressed as false doctrine."

If these words mean anything, they clearly state that these four (or five) points must be regarded as "open," that is, non-church-divisive questions.

That is the historic Iowan position. We have quoted above the declaration of the Iowans in 1858 regarding the "chief points" of their "conception of the Last Things" and their declaration of 1859 in which they stated that they treated "the doctrine of the Last Things as an open question." In 1904 Dr. Deindoerfer wrote: "In the sphere of doctrine we recognize such points in which Lutheran Christians and Lutheran churches may hold a different opinion without being compelled to refuse each other church fellowship. . . . We have called and do call such points 'open questions'." (Quoted in *Lehre und Wehre*, 50, p. 440.) "Such a point is found in the doctrine of the Church" (P. 442), "the doctrine of the Ministry" (P. 445), "the doctrine of Sunday" (P. 448). Dr. Deindoerfer then lists also "several points, which concern future matters," such as "Antichrist" (P. 489), "future millennial reign of Christ on earth" (P. 494), and "first resurrection" (P. 495).

The ACDP therefore agrees with the historic Iowan position in this matter.

BUT THEREBY THE ACDP COMES INTO DIRECT CONFLICT WITH PAR. 44 OF THE BRIEF STATEMENT OF THE DOCTRINAL POSITION OF THE MISSOURI SYNOD, WHICH EXPRESSLY STATES: "NOT TO BE INCLUDED IN THE NUMBER OF OPEN QUESTIONS ARE THE FOLLOWING: THE DOCTRINES OF THE CHURCH AND THE MINISTRY, OF SUNDAY, OF CHILIASM, AND OF ANTICHRIST, THESE DOCTRINES BEING CLEARLY DEFINED IN SCRIPTURE."

Speaking the Language of Iowa

In 1879, in stating its doctrinal position over against the Missouri Synod, the Iowa Synod referred to "some points" in controversy in the "doctrine of the Church and its Ministry" and to the "divergent views in the doctrines of the Last Things" as "points of doctrines" (*Lehrpunkte*; cf. German original quoted in *Lehre und Wehre*, 25, p. 279) and said: "There are doctrines, even doctrines of the Bible, concerning which members of our church may hold different views and convictions without thereby being compelled to refuse each other church fellowship."

The Iowa Synod of 1879 referred to the five points — Church, Antichrist, conversion of the Jews, resurrection of the martyrs, and thousand year reign. The ACDP seemingly refers only to the last points. The Iowa Synod spoke of these points as "doctrines, even doctrines of the Bible." The ACDP, on the other hand, speaks of *the same points* as "questions related to doctrines of the Bible," in other words "open questions." Then using the identical phraseology, the Iowa Synod of 1879 and the ACDP say of *these same points*: "concerning which members of our Church may hold different views and convictions without thereby being compelled to refuse each other church fellowship." The original statement of the Iowa Synod is of course in the German language. But the exact wording of the ACDP in *Report*, p. 33:100 (except the difference pointed out above) is the translation of Iowa's declaration as quoted in *Report*, p. 26:89.

That subscribers to the ACDP report are no longer in full agreement with Missouri's historic Scriptural position but now subscribe to the historic Iowan position we shall also see as we now take up each one of these points separately.

(To be continued)

sented discussion of a timely subject. It is not correct to say that when it is true to its Lord and to itself the Church is "always 'for' rather than 'against'" (Preface.) The doctrine of the Church is confused on pages 23, 24, 27, 31. "There are indeed sins which are classified as sins of weakness, but they represent only a superficial aspect of the problem" is a statement to which we cannot subscribe: such a classification represents an important aspect of the doctrine of sin. II Thess. 2, 7-10 is not applied, as it should be, to the great papal Antichrist, but to the whole province of evil and enmity against God in the world, and especially to the "present radical development of sin" in "present world developments." (P. 13. 15. 145.) We reckon the identification of the first horseman of the Apocalypse as Christ (pp. 22.153) as a misinterpretation of Rev. 6,2.8, an exegetical error, though not in itself a doctrinal one, since the fact stated by the exegete is certainly taught elsewhere in Scripture, while Rev. 6, 2. 8, however, reveals something else, namely, worldly conquest by tyrannous oppressors throughout this New Testament age. In his presentation of the subject of Holy Baptism, the author makes some fine statements and then spoils it all by saying: "All that is required from our side is that spiritual receptiveness which the Holy Spirit creates in such as do not wilfully resist Him." (P. 47.) Thus we here again have an example of an error in the doctrine of conversion which is stubbornly held to in the American Lutheran Conference. Lutheran teaching gives to God all of the glory due Him, also the glory that "in conversion God, through the dealing of the Holy Ghost, makes out of stubborn and unwilling men willing ones." (Formula of Concord, Epitome, Art. II, of Free Will, Par. 17.) That, finally is the test of all true religion. (Rev. 4. 11.)

P. H. B.

● Review of Publications

The Christian Church in a Secularized World.

By John R. Lavik, M.A., D.D., 154 pages, 6×8½in. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis. \$2.00.

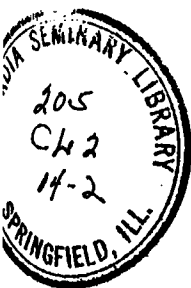
The theme announced in the title of this book is consistently carried out in its various ramifications in 13 chapters. Unfortunately your reviewer must find fault with a number of things in this otherwise rather well pre-

● What Our Readers Say

"If you don't like the professors at Concordia in St. Louis, why don't you and your Confessional Lutherans break from the Missouri Synod and form your own seminary at Springfield, Ill.? We admire Dr. Wm. Arndt, Dr. Pelikan, Dr. Sieck, and others and want to join in with them. This break is coming, and the sooner the better!!! — Sincerely yours, Wartburg Students." (Postmarked at Dubuque, Iowa, Oct. 16, 1952.)

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MOTTO: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding ought of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquillity, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

VOLUME XIV

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NUMBER 2

IN THIS ISSUE: Missouri at the Crossroads — The Doctrine of the Antichrist — The Conversion of Israel as a Nation — The Resurrection of the Martyrs — The Beginning of the "Thousand Years" — Non-Fundamental Doctrines and Church Fellowship — Which Way, Missouri-To the Left Or to the Right?

- Missouri at the Crossroads
By the Authors of Memorial 609
A. A. BRAUER,
PAUL H. BURGDORF,
THEO. DIERKS, AND
A. T. KRETZMANN.
(Concluded)

III.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE ANTICHRIST

The Difference on This Point

Referring to the difference between Iowa and Missouri on this point, Dr. Deindoerfer said: "The Missouri Synod demands that every Lutheran and especially every teacher of the Lutheran Church must acknowledge

and believe that the pope is the very Antichrist, that in him and his kingdom the prophecies of this last enemy of Christ are *wholly and completely fulfilled* and therefore one dare not expect a further and more complete fulfillment of the same. . . Our Synod, however, wants to have the question left open, whether the final and complete fulfillment of that which Scripture prophecies of the Antichrist is still to be expected. Those who from Scripture have gained the conviction that the *final* fulfillment of these prophecies is still to be expected in the future should have the same right in the Church as those who believe that they are convinced that in the Roman papacy everything is already fulfilled . . . Here it is not

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a matter of accepting in faith or rejecting
a clearly expressed teaching of Scripture.
For Scripture indeed clearly and definitely
teaches the coming of the Antichrist previous
to the glorious coming of Jesus Christ and
characterizes the work of Satan which he
will perform. But Scripture does not teach
that the pope and the papacy is the Anti-
christ and Antichristendom. It is rather a
human application of the teaching of Scrip-
ture concerning the Antichrist and his doings
and ways, which must be distinguished
from the teaching of Scripture itself."
(Quoted in *Lehre und Wehre*, 50, p. 489f.)

Two questions are here involved. (1)
Have the Antichrist prophecies been fulfilled
in the pope of Rome? (2) Is the statement
that the pope is the Antichrist a clearly
defined doctrine of Scripture? If the first

question is answered in the affirmative, then
there is no room for the dream of the chili-
asts of a future and final Antichrist preced-
ing a supposed millennial reign of Christ.
If the second question is answered in the
affirmative, then a denial of this statement
is church divisive. We shall consider the
latter question first.

"A Clearly Expressed Teaching of Scripture"

Answering Dr. Deindoerfer, Dr. Stoeck-
hardt said: "We confidently assert that it is
the teaching of Scripture and no human
application of the teaching of Scripture, that
the pope is the Antichrist. Here, too, it is
a matter of accepting in faith or rejecting
a clearly expressed doctrine of Scripture."
(*Lehre und Wehre*, 50, p. 492.)

This is in full agreement with the Luth-
eran Confessions: "The errors of the king-
dom of the pope are manifest. And *Scripture*
with its entire voice exclaims that these
errors are a teaching of demons and of Anti-
christ." (*Triglotta*, p. 517; cf. p. 515 and
475). In full agreement with the Lutheran
Confessions, the *Brief Statement* says: "As
to the Antichrist we teach that *the prophe-
cies of the Holy Scripture* concerning the
Antichrist, 2 Thess. 2, 3-12; 1 John 2, 18,
have been fulfilled in the pope of Rome and
his dominion. *All the features of the Anti-
christ as drawn in these prophecies* . . .
are the outstanding characteristics of the
Papacy." (Par. 43. Our emphasis.) To
this the *Brief Statement* then adds that the
doctrine of Antichrist is "clearly defined in
Scripture." (Par. 44.) The Scriptural "doc-
trine of Antichrist" includes *who Antichrist*
is, for Scripture expressly states that *he*
shall be revealed. 2 Thess. 2:3, 6, 8. Much
is made of the argument that the Bible does
not say in so many words that the pope is
the Antichrist. But this argument proves
too much. For then Christians would never
be able to know who Antichrist is and he
would never be revealed.

"Then Shall That Wicked Be Revealed"

How can we identify Antichrist? There
is only one way and that is by comparing
prophecy with fulfillment. *This is a Scrip-
tural proof endorsed by Scripture itself*. Acts
18:28 tells us that Apollos utterly confuted
the Jews "*showing by the Scriptures* that
Jesus was the Christ." The Apostle in 2 Peter
1:16-18 points to the evidence of his own
eyes, to a special revelation of the Father,
and the "*more sure word of prophecy*." The
Jews to whom the Apostles preached Jesus

as the Christ did not acknowledge the Apostles as inspired witnesses, nor Jesus as the promised Messiah and the Son of God. For *them* the Apostles had no other proof than prophecy and fulfillment. They always employed this line of argumentation (Acts 17:2, 3; 28:23) as did also Christ Himself (Luke 4:21; 7:19-23; 24:25-27). But Christ also clearly teaches that when a prophecy has been fulfilled, then it is *unbelief of that prophecy* to contend that it has not been fulfilled. (See John 5:45-47.)

The ACDP contends: "The early Christians could not have identified the Antichrist as we do. If it were a clearly expressed teaching of Scripture they must have been able to do so." (Report, p. 14:38.) What grotesque logic! The early Christians could not identify the pope as the Antichrist, not because it is not a clearly expressed teaching of Scripture, but because Antichrist *was not yet revealed*. St. Paul says, "The mystery of iniquity doth already work." There was, however, a hindrance which retarded its full expansion. But when that restraint was removed, then the man of sin would be "*revealed in his time*." (2 Thess. 2:6, 7.) Before Antichrist was revealed he could not be identified.

Agreeing 100% with Iowa

In this matter the ACDP has gone over completely to the Iowan position, as one may see from a comparison of its report with the words of Dr. Deindoerfer quoted above.

Dr. Deindoerfer said: "*Scripture does not teach that the pope and the papacy is the Antichrist and Antichristendom*." The ACDP says: "*Scripture does not teach that the Pope is the Antichrist*." (Report, p. 14:38. Our emphasis.) If that be true, then the confession of the Lutheran Church that "the pope is the very Antichrist" falls under the condemnation of Jer. 23:16; 1 Peter 4:11, and similar passages. Then no one has the right to teach that the pope is the Antichrist.

Dr. Deindoerfer said: "Scripture indeed clearly and definitely teaches the coming of the Antichrist." The ACDP says: "It (Scripture) teaches that there will be an Antichrist (prophecy)." But Scripture also expressly teaches that Antichrist *would be revealed*, 2 Thess. 2:3, 6, 8.

Dr. Deindoerfer said that the statement (that the pope is the Antichrist) is "a human application of the teaching of Scripture concerning the Antichrist . . . which must be distinguished from the teaching of Scripture itself." [Reu, *Lutheran Dogmatics*,

1945 ed., p. 378 calls it an "historical judgment." This is repeated by the A.L.C. Declaration. Cf. *Proceedings*, 1938, p. 225.] The ACDP says: "We identify the Antichrist as the Papacy. This is an historical judgment based on Scripture." The ACDP too distinguishes between "an historical judgment based on Scripture" and the teaching of Scripture itself. It expressly says: "*Scripture does not teach that the pope is the Antichrist*." (Our emphasis.) Again it says: "The statement that the pope is the Antichrist, e.g., is not a *clear doctrine* of Scripture, *but* an historical judgment based on Scripture." (Report, p. 42:136. Our emphasis.)

Dr. Deindoerfer said: "Here it is not a matter of accepting in faith or rejecting a clearly expressed teaching of Scripture." To this Dr. Stoeckhardt had responded: "We do confidently assert that it is the teaching of Scripture . . . that the pope is the Antichrist. Here, too, it is a matter of accepting in faith or rejecting a clearly expressed doctrine of Scripture." But the ACDP says: "The quotation from *Lehre und Wehre*" — the words of Dr. Stoeckhardt just cited — "*goes too far*." . . . We believe that there is no conflict in the positions of the Scriptures, the Confessions, the Missouri Synod, the A.L.C., Dr. Arndt, and the signers as identifying the Antichrist in the Papacy. The conflict arises in holding that this identifying is a *clearly expressed doctrine of Scripture*, whereas it is not." (Report, p. 14:38. Our emphasis.)

Synod's Definition of a "Scriptural Doctrine"

The ACDP says: "We must beware of calling things clear doctrines of Scripture which are not. For example, when it is stated that the Pope is the Antichrist is a 'doctrine of Scripture,' the word 'doctrine' is not in harmony with Synod's definition." (Report, p. 40:123.)

In the *American Lutheran*, 1942, p. 147, Pastor J. H. Gockel had rightly said: "If the identification of the Pope as the very Antichrist is granted the status of a non-fundamental *doctrine*, then it cannot be said that deviation from it need not be divisive of church fellowship. Even non-fundamental doctrines are teachings clearly revealed in the Scriptures." But Pastor Gockel denied that it is a "doctrine" of Scripture that the pope is the Antichrist, because he contended that it is not "expressly taught in the Bible." After the manner of the Iowans he contended

that the Confession's answer to the Antichrist question is an "historical judgment, or an answer to an open question." (*Ibid.*, p. 167.) In view of these facts the Central Regional Conference of the Northern Illinois District requested Synod to define a "Scriptural doctrine." (*Proceedings*, 1944, p. 232ff.) It is therefore *in relation to this very issue before us*, whether or not it is a "Scriptural doctrine" that the pope is the Antichrist, that Synod declared: "A Scriptural doctrine is a truth contained in, expressed by, or properly drawn from Scripture."

Does the ACDP deny — as Pastor Gockel did — that it is a *doctrine* of Scripture that the pope is the very Antichrist because this truth is not "expressed by" the Bible? Or does it contend that this truth is neither "contained in" nor "properly drawn from Scripture"?

Repudiating the Brief Statement

The *Brief Statement* says that the "doctrine of Antichrist" is a "doctrine clearly defined in Scripture." (Par. 44.) What is the Scriptural doctrine of the Antichrist? Merely that Antichrist shall appear before the second coming of Christ? Hardly! Scripture expressly teaches that Antichrist *shall be revealed*, 2 Thess. 2:3, 6, 8, and describes him in such detail that we can with the certainty of faith answer the question who Antichrist is. The Missouri Synod confesses that "God revealed him through the Reformation" and that the Antichrist prophecies "have been fulfilled in the Pope of Rome and his dominion." (Par. 43.) This is the "doctrine of Antichrist" which Missouri has always confessed over against Iowa, and of *this teaching* the Missouri Synod confesses (also over against Iowa) that this is a "doctrine clearly defined in Scripture."

The ACDP says: "It is not" a "clearly expressed doctrine of Scripture." (*Report*, p. 15:38.) "There is disagreement between some views because the Scriptures are not clear on those points. . . All that we say is that the doctrine (s) of the Antichrist . . . (is) not so clearly revealed in Scripture that we have the right to condemn the views expressed as false doctrine." (*Report*, p. 33:100.)

THE REPUDIATION OF MISSOURI'S HISTORIC SCRIPTURAL CONFESSION ON THIS MATTER, AS LAID DOWN IN THE BRIEF STATEMENT OF THE DOCTRINAL POSITION OF THE MISSOURI SYNOD, COULD NOT BE EXPRESSED IN CLEARER WORDS.

Have the Antichrist Prophecies Been Fulfilled in the Pope of Rome?

Dr. Deindorfer said that the Iowa Synod wanted to have the question left open whether the final and complete fulfillment of that which Scripture prophecies of the Antichrist is still to be expected.

The ACDP says: "The A.L.C. teaches that the Pope is the Antichrist. With reference to the future it says that this Antichrist, the Papacy, not a new one, may reach new heights of power. Who can doubt that if he reads Revelation? To read millennialism into this teaching is absurd." (*Report*, p. 14:38.)

The A.L.C. does not teach what the ACDP mistakenly attributes to it, namely, that "this Antichrist, the Papacy, not a new one, may reach new heights of power." On the contrary, in its *Declaration* it refers to an "antichristian power already present now," of which the papacy is but a single manifestation. "Among all the antichristian manifestations in the history of the world and the Church that lie behind us in the past there is none that fits the description given in 2 Thess. 2 better than the Papacy. . . The answer to the question whether in the *future* that is still before us, prior to the return of Christ, a special unfolding and *personal* concentration of the antichristian power already present now" (which may or may not be the papacy) "and thus a still more comprehensive fulfillment of 2 Thess. 2 may occur" (than the antichristian manifestation which as a matter of historical judgment exists in the papacy), "we leave to the Lord and Ruler of the Church and world history." (*Proceedings*, 1938, n. 225. Our emphasis.)

With such statements *chiliasts* within the A.L.C. can safeguard their *un-Scriptural teaching* of a future appearance of a personal Antichrist preceding the supposed millennial reign of Christ. The ACDP says: "To read millennialism into this teaching is absurd." But let the ACDP actually investigate the chiliastic literature emanating from the Iowan wing of the A.L.C. and it will soon realize the truth of our statement. In the chiliastic scheme the appearance of a future and final personal Antichrist is followed by the appearance of Christ, who overthrows Antichrist, causes the first resurrection and then begins His millennial reign. (See Reu, *Lutheran Dogmatics*, 1945 ed., p. 378ff and *Wartburg Seminary Quarterly*, Sept., 1947: "We fully agree with the Reformers that the

pope has something of the Antichristian character about him. . . Scripture nowhere says in unequivocal words that the pope is the Antichrist. . . Evidently he (Antichrist) is a person, not an institution or some vague power. . . The Antichrist will be a secular ruler who arrogates to himself the authority of God and forbids the worship of God." Remember that the Iowa District of the A.L.C. resolved that the latter essay "should be given wide circulation"!)

IV.

THE CONVERSION OF ISRAEL AS A NATION

A Feature of Chiliasm

We noted above that the Iowans in 1858 listed the "conversion of the Jews" as one of the "chief points" of their "Biblical chiliasm" or their "conception of the Last Things." In *Lutheran Dogmatics*, 1945 ed., p. 374f, where he brings his chiliastic notions, Dr. Reu says: "Paul expressed the conviction that *Israel as a nation* — though not all Jews — would be restored to its place as the people of God. . . Paul by the argument from analogy, infers from the reinstatement of Israel that that resurrection from the dead, i.e., the return of Christ and the consummation of the kingdom will be closely connected with it . . . All Israel shall be saved (PAS Israel does not mean all members of the nation of Israel, but the nation as a whole regardless of the number of non-participating individuals) . . . Nor has Paul in mind the spasmodically happening conversion of Jewish persons." Dr. Matzner told the Iowan District of the A.L.C. in connection with his chiliastic notions: "Paul intimates that 'when the fulness of the Gentiles has been brought about' (Rom. 11:25) and when the Gentiles grow indifferent to the blessings of the Gospel, then the Jews will again have their turn and will show themselves amenable to the Gospel." (Quoted by Professor Albrecht in *Confessional Lutheran*, 1949, p. 130f.)

From this we see that the "conversion of Israel before the end of the world" is indeed coupled with chiliasm by chiliasts within the A.L.C. This cannot be denied. Nor can it be denied that the Missouri Synod confesses that "Scripture clearly teaches . . . there will be no general conversion, a conversion *en masse*, of the Jewish nation." (*Brief Statement*, par. 42.)

"A Question of Interpretation"

Now in this matter — and that includes the question whether or not the "teaching of a general conversion of the Jews" is Scriptural or to be rejected as un-Scriptural — Dr. Arndt says that "we are faced with a question of interpretation which is not without its difficulties." In other words, according to Dr. Arndt, the assertion of the *Brief Statement* "that there will be no general conversion, a conversion *en masse*, of the Jewish nation" is not based on a *clear statement* of Scripture, but here we are dealing with "a question of interpretation which is not without its difficulties." This is then expressly stated by the ACDP: "The truth of this statement is borne out by the fact that Stoeckhardt in his *Kommentar ueber den Brief Pauli an die Roemer*, St. Louis, 1907, devotes 15 pages to the three verses Rom. 11:25-27, giving the opinions of a great many writers ancient and contemporary. Evidently the passages are not as clear as the *Brief Statement* implies. Cf. *Expositor's Greek Testament*." (*Report*, p. 17:49.)

The ACDP, which finds fault with the authors of Memorial 609 for referring to the synodical fathers (*Report*, p. 44:142), itself refers us to the millennialistic *Expositor's Greek Testament*. Don't quote the fathers! Quote the *Expositor's Greek Testament*! We shall not here go into detail regarding Dr. Stoeckhardt's Commentary on Romans. Suffice it to say that Dr. Stoeckhardt after pointing out that the "hope of a glorious future of Israel is closely interwoven with chiliastic interests," shows in detail that chiliasts have "in reality no right" to lay claim to the wording of this text for their hope of a "general conversion of the Jews before the end of the world." (P. 536, 540.)

Directly Attacking the Brief Statement

Since the Presidium has "after careful thought and study" made the ACDP report its own," therefore the *Confessional Lutheran*, April, 1952 charged the Presidium with making a "direct public attack" on the *Brief Statement* and with a "rejection of its teaching and confession."

In its letter to the Missouri clergy (May 6 and 12, 1952) the Presidium contended that this is an "unwarranted charge" and "flatly denies it." The Presidium distinguished between a "universal conversion of the Jewish nation as taught by the millennialists" and as it is held by those "who reject the millennium." It then restricted

the *Brief Statement's* rejection of a universal conversion of the Jews to the former, "as a part and phase of a millennium."

But the *Brief Statement* makes no such distinction or restriction. On the contrary, it speaks of the "universal conversion of the Jewish nation," not "as a part and phase of a millennium," but as a *type* of millennialism or chiliasm. "We reject every type of Millennialism, or Chiliasm, the opinions . . . that before the end of the world a universal conversion of the Jewish nation (of Israel according to the flesh) will take place. Over against this, *Scripture clearly teaches* . . . that there will be no general conversion, a conversion *en masse*, of the Jewish nation, Rom. 11, 7; 2 Cor. 3, 14; Rom. 11, 25; 1 Thess. 2, 16. According to these clear passages of Scripture we reject the whole of Millennialism." (Par. 42. Our emphasis.)

The Missouri Synod rejects as un-Scriptural — whether taught by millennialists or anti-millennialists — the typically chiliastic opinion "that before the end of the world a universal conversion of the Jewish nation will take place." It does so on the ground that it is *contrary to the analogy of faith*, which the Missouri Synod itself defines as "the clear passages of the Scriptures themselves." "Over against this," says the *Brief Statement*, "*Scripture clearly teaches* . . . that there will be no general conversion, a conversion *en masse*, of the Jewish nation." It then cites what it expressly calls "clear passages of Scripture." The ACDP admits that the *Brief Statement* "says that the passages it quotes are clear." (Report, p. 17:48.) But then it directly attacks the *Brief Statement*, SUBVERTING ITS SCRIPTURAL FOUNDATION, by continuing: "Evidently the passages are not as clear as the *Brief Statement* implies." (Report, p. 17:49.)

Remove the Scriptural foundation or proof of the *Brief Statement* and the *Brief Statement* itself must necessarily collapse.

The ACDP then goes a step further. Regarding the conversion of the Jews, which the Missouri Synod rejects as un-Scriptural, as being *contrary to clear passages of Scripture*, the ACDP says: "All that we say is that . . . the conversion of the Jews, as explained above, (is) not so clearly revealed in Scripture that we have the right to condemn the views expressed as false doctrine." (Report, p. 34:100. Our emphasis.)

THE CHARGE OF THE CONFESSIONAL LUTHERAN IS THEREFORE CORRECT. The explanation given by the Presidium in its

letter of May 6 does not and cannot explain away these indisputable facts: (1) the ACDP flatly denies the *Brief Statement's* assertion that the passages it cites for rejecting the conversion of the Jews are "clear" by stating: "Evidently the passages are not as clear as the *Brief Statement* implies." (2) The ACDP challenges the *Brief Statement's* right to reject such conversion of the Jews as un-Scriptural and to condemn it as "false doctrine."

V.

THE RESURRECTION OF THE MARTYRS

The Chiliastic Conception

In 1858 the Iowa Synod said: "Closely connected with this coming of Christ to destroy Antichrist is the millennial reign of Christ with the first resurrection . . . a bodily resurrection." (Colloquy, p. 3.) Reu, *Lutheran Dogmatics*, 1945 ed., p. 378 says: "Antichrist will be vanquished by Christ who will also cause the first resurrection. When afflictions of the Christians have become most grievous and Antichrist's presumption has reached its peak, then Christ will intervene and terminate Antichrist's rule . . . The term 'first resurrection' is taken from Rev. 20:5 where it is stated that the souls of those who during the reign of Antichrist had proved to be faithful witnesses and had suffered martyrdom for this cause, were restored to life while the other dead were not resuscitated . . . We do not venture to decide definitely where this reign will be established whether in heaven or in earth. It is not stated specifically, but the introduction of verse 4 seems to indicate that it is in heaven . . . In distinction to the other dead, the martyrs are raised, endowed with a resurrection body (i.e., glorified) and enter into heaven in order to take part in Christ's reign which now begins with special power." Dr. Matzner of Wartburg Seminary said: "John tells us that, when Antichrist has been disposed of and Satan has been bound for a period, then those who have been faithful under the dreadful persecutions and have died as martyrs will be raised from the dead and will reign with Christ." (Quoted by Prof. Albrecht in *Conf. Luth.*, 1950, p. 90.)

"A Mark of Gross and Damnable Chiliasm"

Dr. Arndt had said in his essay: "The error that we object to is the view that Christ will raise the martyrs and with them form a Kingdom of Glory here on earth, the dream of the millennialists. Such an interpreta-

tion is contrary to the clear passages of Scripture concerning the last times. But this construction of the meaning is definitely rejected by the A.L.C. theologians." (*Report*, p. 18:53. Note the emphasis on "here on earth" p. 20:61.)

In its *Declaration* the A.L.C. said that "the representatives of this opinion do not assume a rule of the martyrs here on earth but hold that they go directly to heaven and rule there with Christ." (*Proceedings*, 1938, p. 225.) In answer, the St. Louis Resolutions of 1938 said: "In regard to this assumption of a physical resurrection of the martyrs before Judgement Day the *Missouri Synod teaches* that this is a *misinterpretation* of Rev. 20:4." (*Proceedings*, 1938, p. 230. Our emphasis.) But both Dr. Arndt and the ACDP, though not accepting the view as their own, do not reject it as "heretical" if it is held that "their bodies *will be taken into heaven*." (*Report*, p. 19:59 and p. 20:66. Our emphasis.)

Dr. Arndt in this connection refers to *Lehre und Wehre*, 1872, p. 75 and thereby seemingly gives the impression as though chiliasts within the A.L.C. merely teach a physical resurrection of a few individuals prior to Judgment Day, as Selnecker did. But the "indeed peculiar notion of Selnecker that God until Judgment Day from time to time beforehand already raised 'some of His own'," says Dr. Walther, "is *toto coelo* different from the delusion of the chiliasts, that for the inauguration of a certain intermediate kingdom of a thousand years before Judgment Day Christ will at one time, simultaneously resurrect all His own or at least the whole class of martyrs." The latter wholly subverts the article of the universal resurrection of the good and evil on the Last Day. "Hence it is that the teaching that a special physical resurrection precedes the so-called millennial kingdom has ever been regarded in our church as a mark of gross and damnable chiliasm."

But Dr. Arndt and the ACDP *falsely* contend that such "delusion of the chiliasts" does not exist among A.L.C. theologians, because those within the A.L.C. who hold such views do not hold that the martyrs will rule on earth but that they will rule *in heaven*.

Perverse Rationalism

The authors of Memorial 609 had cited to Synod the words of Dr. A. L. Graebner: "Let the chiliasts be serious with the word 'souls,' and then the whole proof of chiliasm from this passage collapses." Of this the

ACDP says: "The literalistic reference to 'souls' in the Rev. 20 passage by the signers of Memorial 609 cannot be maintained in the face of Rev. 6:9f, where the 'souls' are given white robes." (*Report*, p. 20:63.)

In accordance with Rev. 1:1 ("signified") we understand the "robes" in ch. 6:9f as symbols of everlasting righteousness, as Rev. 19:8 *itself explains it*. The contention that the "white robes" in Rev. 6:9, 11 prove that the "souls" of Rev. 20 must have bodies is false rationalism pure and simple. When the word "souls" is used with the genitive ("I saw the souls of *them* that were beheaded," etc.) it cannot mean anything else but "souls." If John meant "body," then he would have written: "I saw the bodies of *them* that were beheaded," etc.

Irresponsible Misrepresentations

The ACDP says: "There is no claim in Dr. Arndt's essay that believers (in general) will rise a thousand years before Judgment Day. Such misrepresentations are irresponsible." (*Report*, p. 20:64.)

The authors of Memorial 609 did not say, that "in Dr. Arndt's essay there is [the] claim that believers (in general) will rise a thousand years before Judgment Day." *Such insinuations by the ACDP are indeed irresponsible*. The authors of Memorial 609 had merely cited the words of Dr. Stoeckhardt "Whoever insists that the believers will rise a thousand years before Judgment Day calls Christ a liar," to show what Missouri "has taught." (See *Report*, p. 18:55.)

The ACDP finally says: "The signers have not proved that the A.L.C. or Dr. Arndt are teaching 'gross and damnable chiliasm,' 'perversion of the text,' or something 'contradicting other clear passages of Scripture'." (*Report*, p. 20:66.)

The authors of Memorial 609 did not charge either Dr. Arndt or the A.L.C. with "teaching 'gross and damnable chiliasm . . .'" *Such misrepresentations by the ACDP are indeed irresponsible*. The authors of Memorial 609 had said: "In short, what Missouri rejects as a mark of gross and damnable chiliasm, as being a perversion of the text, and as contradicting other clear passages of Scripture — against that Dr. Arndt and the A.L.C. would not protest." (*Report*, p. 19:58.) Why not? Because Dr. Arndt *falsely* contends that such chiliastic notions are definitely rejected by A.L.C. theologians, since they reject a reign of the martyrs "*here on earth*."

Contradicting the Brief Statement

The *Brief Statement* rejects the opinion "that before the general resurrection on Judgment Day a number of departed Christians or martyrs are to be raised again to reign in glory in this world." It does so on the ground that "*Scripture clearly teaches . . . that there will be but one resurrection of the dead, John 5, 28; 6, 39, 40.*" (Par. 42.) But again the ACDP challenges the *Brief Statement's* right to reject this opinion as un-Scriptural. "There is disagreement between some views because the Scriptures are not clear on those points. . . All that we say is that . . . the resurrection of the martyrs . . . as explained above, (is) not so clearly revealed in Scripture that we have the right to condemn the views expressed as false doctrine." (Report, p. 33:100. Our emphasis.)

HERE AGAIN THE ACDP CLEARLY REPUDIATES THE TEACHING OF THE MISSOURI SYNOD.

VI.

THE BEGINNING OF THE "THOUSAND YEARS"

The Exact Point of Difference

On this matter Dr. Deindorfer said: "It (the Missouri Synod) has drawn up as a certain doctrine of faith the statement that Judgment Day can come any day. Our synod has not set up the doctrine that the thousand year reign of Christ still lies in the future and must still be expected . . . But it has had many members and undoubtedly still has many who for their own person had and have the conviction, that the prophecy of the thousand year reign has not yet been fulfilled, but that its fulfillment is still to be expected, before the end of the world occurs. And it wants to grant these members of the Lutheran Church the same right as those who believe that they are convinced that this thousand year reign has already occurred." (Quoted in *Lehre und Wehre*, 50, p. 495.)

In our circles it is generally held that the "thousand years" and the "little season" of Rev. 20 represent the whole New Testament era. But there are also some who take the "thousand years" literally and place it in the past. (Cf. e.g., Zorn, *Offenbarung*, p. 323; Goesswein, n. 271.) The ACDP falsely contends that the Missouri Synod does not "condemn those who believe that the beginning of the thousand years of Scripture (not millennium) is still in the future." (Report, p. 22:76.) It is true, our church does not

condemn a person merely because he takes the "thousand years" literally. However, if a person teaches that the fulfillment of the Rev. 20 prophecy "is still in the future" and that the "thousand years" (taken literally) are still to be expected, then our Church condemns such typically *chiliasm* opinion as contrary to the analogy of faith. Thus the *Brief Statement* states "that the time of the Last Day is, and will remain, unknown, Matt. 24, 42; 25, 13; Mark 13, 32, 37; Acts 1, 7, which would not be the case if the Last Day were to come a thousand years after the beginning of a millennium." (Par. 42.)

"An Open Question" (?)

The Iowa Synod as such never taught *chiliasm* except in the very beginning. Furthermore, the Iowa Synod as such has always rejected "coarse" *chiliasm*, but it has always tolerated a so-called "intermediate" *chiliasm* in its midst. And this *chiliasm*, as shown by the statement of Dr. Deindorfer quoted above, was always safeguarded by the Iowans' insisting that one could not definitely decide whether the thousand years of Rev. 20 lie in the past or in the future. Thus likewise the A.L.C. in its *Declaration* makes room for the *chiliasm* which is taught within the Iowan wing of the A.L.C. to this day by citing the words of Dr. Walther that "it is not possible to say with absolute certainty either that the thousand years have already been fulfilled or that they still lie in the future." (*Proceedings*, 1938, p. 225.) The ACDP then enlarges this room for *chiliasm* by stating that "the beginning of the thousand years falls in with the definition: 'Those questions in the domain of Christian doctrine may be termed open questions which Scripture answers either not at all or not clearly'." (Report, 23:76.)

We have stated that a basic fault of the ACDP report on *chiliasm* is that it treats the various points referred to in the *Declaration* separately and not as part and parcel of *chiliasm*. It treats each point by itself as though it were a harmless opinion which must not be rejected as false doctrine.

VII.

NON-FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINES AND CHURCH FELLOWSHIP

Dr. Arndt's Explanation

In explaining his statement, "Church fellowship is not made impossible by the existence of error in the views of an individual or of a church body provided these errors

are of a non-fundamental nature and the right attitude toward Christ and the Word of God is maintained," Dr. Arndt says: "I do not grant error the right to exist. Whatever is contrary to the Word of God must be criticized as an error, whether it refers to a fundamental or non-fundamental doctrine. That is why I include in my essay the statement that we do indeed have to insist on loyalty to everything that God has taught. At the same time we distinguish between fundamental and non-fundamental doctrines. . . This, too, is the position of Holy Scriptures. The Apostle Paul, in Romans 14 and 1 Corinthians 8-10, distinguishes between the true position and the erroneous positions held by certain people that were weak in faith. The latter he wants to see treated with brotherly consideration. The points on which they have erred were not of a nature to destroy their Christian faith. Cf. also 1 Cor. 3:11-15." (*Report*, p. 27:94.)

Here note, first of all, that Dr. Arndt speaks of errors which are not of a nature to destroy saving faith. But every departure from *any* truth of God's Word has the tendency to spread and infect other doctrines, Gal. 5:9, and is an offense, Rom. 16:17. *Every* departure from God's Word, both in doctrine and life (Matt. 5:19; Rom. 14:15, 20, 21; 1 Cor. 8:11), as every other sin, has the seed of death in it. It will eventually destroy saving faith, unless God in his mercy prevents such destruction.

Note, in the second place, that Dr. Arndt in distinguishing between fundamental and non-fundamental doctrines places the latter in a special category and says of them that "they need not be divisive of church fellowship." (*Report*, p. 25:85a.) Here Dr. Arndt falls back on the enigmatic expression of the discredited and discarded 1938 resolutions.

"Non-Fundamental Doctrines of Scripture Are Not Divisive"

In reference to the theme of the essay read by him before the Western District in 1948 Dr. Arndt, in a letter dated April 22, 1948, was asked: "The official theme then reads: 'Which Are the Non-Fundamental Doctrines of Scripture that are Not Divisive of Pulpit and Altar Fellowship?' So that we may properly understand each other, I would ask: Am I correct or am I wrong in assuming that you hold that there are certain non-fundamental doctrines which in your opinion are not divisive of church fellowship, while others are?" To this Dr. Arndt, in a

letter dated May 3, 1948, responded: "As to the meaning of the official theme of my Western District essay, I take the relative clause to be not restrictive but descriptive. I think that is the construction which the committee that chose the theme had in mind. The meaning then would be that non-fundamental doctrines of Scripture are not divisive of pulpit and altar fellowship. Every conservative Lutheran sees that such a statement needs an explanation. Every non-fundamental doctrine, be its character apparently ever so insignificant, may become divisive. It all depends on the attitude toward the Scriptures and the Confessions which an individual or a church body assumes."

But every denial of anything clearly taught in God's Word, whether it concerns a fundamental or a non-fundamental matter, is by its very nature, inherently, divisive. John 10:35; Eph. 4:3-6; Gal. 5:9; II Tim. 2:17, etc. It divides even when a separation in external fellowship does not occur. If such denial of *anything clearly* taught in Scripture is persisted in, *regardless whether it pertains to a fundamental or to a non-fundamental doctrine*, then Rom. 16:17 and similar passages demand "Avoid them!"

With this the ACDP agrees. "The persistent denial of any *clear* doctrine of Scripture, fundamental or non-fundamental, is divisive of church fellowship." (*Report*, p. 42:136.)

Repudiating Point 5 and 11 of "A Statement"

The contention of Dr. Arndt that "non-fundamental doctrines of Scriptures are not divisive of church fellowship" is the false, un-Scriptural position of Point 11 of "A Statement" — "Church fellowship is possible without complete agreement in details of doctrine and practice which have never been considered divisive in the Lutheran Church."

Memorial 609 had said: "That (the position advocated by Dr. Arndt) is also the position of *A Statement*, of which Dr. Arndt is a signer." (*Report*, p. 27:91.) Memorial 617, 3, c, had said: "In the same essay he (Dr. Arndt) also continues to advocate the un-Scriptural position of Point 11 of 'A Statement'." (*Report*, p. 41:126.)

Now on this matter the ACDP said: "The answer to the church fellowship question is given (in 123) above." (*Report* p. 41:127.) Turning to paragraph 123 we read: "Answer to the Signers: Synod still stands where it has always stood: *The persistent denial of any clear doctrine of Scripture is divisive of*

church fellowship (Matt. 28:20; Rom. 16:17; Titus 3:10-11)." (Our emphasis. Note also the reference to Rom. 16:17.)

The repudiation of Points 5 and 11 of "A Statement" could not be expressed in clearer words. We are happy to note that the ACDP takes this position.

However, in its attempt to defend the words of Dr. Arndt, the ACDP has itself fallen into a pit. Space does not permit us to enter into detail regarding the position of Dr. Walther. Suffice it to say: *The supposed conflicting viewpoints in Walther's writings exist only in the mind of the ACDP.* Furthermore, to quote Walther after the manner of the ACDP report cannot but lead to confusion. And it is certainly not "scholarly."

The Amplification of Dr. Arndt's Statement

The ACDP says: "It (the statement of Dr. Arndt) might be amplified, however, to read: 'Church fellowship is not made impossible by the mere existence of error in the views of an individual or of a church body provided these errors are of a non-fundamental nature and they are not wilfully and stubbornly persisted in when shown to be contrary to the clear Word of God.'" (Report, p. 33:99d.)

The question here involved is not: What should be our attitude toward error? The ACDP has correctly answered that question: "The persistent denial of any clear doctrine of Scripture is divisive of church fellowship." Here the question is: What should be our attitude toward the erring? On this question our Synod has always taken the position that, even though no error dare be treated as an open question, the erring brother who errs out of *weakness* or *ignorance* must be tolerated, even if he errs in a *fundamental* doctrine, if he is willing to be taught and does not seek to gain followers for his false views. (See *Milwaukee Colloquy*, p. 76; *Lehre und Wehre*, 14, p. 105.)

If therefore the ACDP would strike the words "provided these errors are of a non-fundamental nature," then the ACDP statement would be Scriptural (See Acts 15) and in harmony with Missouri's official position and practice. We may and should bear with an erring brother, even if his error of weakness pertains to a *fundamental* error. The corrected statement of the ACDP would then read: "Church fellowship is not made impossible by the mere existence of error in the views of an individual or of a church

body, provided they are not wilfully and stubbornly persisted in when shown to be contrary to the clear Word of God."

VIII.

WHICH WAY, MISSOURI — TO THE LEFT OR TO THE RIGHT?

The dispute that has arisen in this matter involves not merely the position of a member of the St. Louis Faculty, nor merely the correctness or incorrectness of the "public doctrine of the Church" as delivered at a District convention (Cf. Report, p. 8:9), but the whole future of the Missouri Synod as an orthodox confessional fellowship is at stake in this issue. Therefore we rightly ask: Which way, Missouri — to the left or to the right?

The Spirit of Iowa Within the Missouri Synod

The spirit of Iowa first gained entrance within the Missouri Synod through the 1938 resolutions, which stated that deviations in the non-fundamental doctrines (Antichrist, conversion of the Jews, resurrection of the martyrs, and the thousand years of Rev. 20), yes, even a difference in the fundamental doctrine of the Church "need not be divisive of church fellowship." (Proceedings, 1938, p. 228-231.) This was the camel's nose in Missouri's tent.

This spirit waxed stronger and bolder in the Statement of the "44." Referring to the same points of differences to which the St. Louis resolutions of 1938 referred but speaking of them as "details of doctrine," Point 11 of A Statement declared that they "have never been considered divisive in the Lutheran Church." This was the camel's foot.

Now the ACDP — probably unwittingly — makes the Iowa declaration of 1879 its own. Here we have the whole camel itself in Missouri's tent. Concerning the four points — Antichrist, conversion of Israel, resurrection of the martyrs, and the thousand year reign — the ACDP says with Iowa Synod of 1879 that "members of our Church may hold different views and convictions without thereby being compelled to refuse each other church fellowship." And here the ACDP gives the same reason that was always given by the Iowan chiliasts: "All that we say is that the doctrines of the Antichrist, the conversion of the Jews, the resurrection of the martyrs, the beginning of the thousand years, as explained above, are not so clearly revealed in Scripture that we have the right to condemn the views expressed as false doctrine."

Direct Conflict with the Brief Statement

By taking this position the ACDP comes into direct conflict with the *Brief Statement*. When Synod authorized the formulation of the *Brief Statement* it specifically instructed its committee to present the doctrine of Scripture "beginning with the *status controversiae*." In this matter the *status controversiae* has always been: Are the existing differences in the doctrine of the Church and the Ministry, of Sunday, of Chiliasm, and of Antichrist to be regarded as open, non-church-divisive questions, in which Scripture does not clearly define truth over against error? The Iowans always affirmed this, but the Missourians denied it. By stating concerning the four points that "members of our Church may hold different views and convictions without thereby being compelled to refuse each other church fellowship," and by stating that these "doctrines" are "not so clearly revealed in Scripture that we have the right to condemn the views expressed as false doctrine," the ACDP flatly contradicts the words of the *Brief Statement*: "Not to be included in the number of open questions are the following: the doctrine . . . of Chiliasm, and of Antichrist, these doctrines being clearly defined in Scripture."

The ACDP then goes even further. The *Brief Statement* says that the passages which it cites to prove that there will be no conversion, a conversion *en masse*, of the Jewish nation are "clear." The ACDP denies this by stating: "Evidently the passages are not as clear as the *Brief Statement* implies." Furthermore, the *Brief Statement* rejects the opinion that before the end of the world a universal conversion of the Jewish nation will take place on the ground that "Scripture clearly teaches . . . that there will be no conversion of the Jewish nation." But the ACDP challenges Missouri's right to make such a rejection because it contends that the "doctrine" of the conversion of the Jews is "not so clearly revealed in Scripture that we have the right to condemn the views expressed as false doctrine." (Incidentally we may here add that the ACDP takes the same position over against the *Brief Statement's* rejection of the resurrection of the martyrs and of a false doctrine of the Antichrist.)

The Most Grievous and Dangerous Error

But the most grievous error of the ACDP report is that it regards the teaching of a "visible side" of the invisible Church as a matter of terminology and expressly declares that "no false doctrine is implied." This

error is most dangerous because the doctrine involved is so closely related to the heart of the Gospel, justification by faith alone, and because the denial of the Scriptural doctrine of the Church has often led to the loss of the Gospel itself.

God has made the Church a steward of His Word. The Church is to preserve the pure doctrine faithfully in its midst. But often a Church forgets to be and remain a humble handmaid of Christ. It wants to be something big in the eyes of the world and have its influence felt. To gain increase in numbers, prestige, and influence, it then begins to compromise this or that jewel of the Gospel. Error is no longer rejected as false doctrine. Those who are looked upon as pillars of the Church, though defending Christian doctrine in general with great erudition, make this or that individual teaching of Scripture uncertain, if they do not expressly deny it. And this decay in the Church usually begins in the professor's chair. Surely, such a Church still preaches Christ. But gradually the offense of the cross is toned down. And the result? The Church soon loses the Gospel itself. Indifference to any truth of God's Word is but a short step to crass rationalism. That has always been the history of all church bodies as they grew older and did not remain faithful to every word of God and did not watch their theological seminaries.

Missouri at the Crossroads

Missouri is now standing at the crossroads. Which way will the Missouri Synod go? Will it continue to go toward the left? The ACDP report like a traffic policeman is directing all traffic to the left. Will the Missouri Synod as a corporate body at its next convention adopt the ACDP report and thus as a corporate body also repudiate its historic Scriptural position and confession? Will the Missouri Synod as a corporate body renudiate the *Brief Statement*, which it reaffirmed in 1947 as "correctly" expressing its doctrinal position?

Wartburg Seminary theology triumphed over the Ohio Synod in 1930. The ACDP report represents a complete surrender to that false, un-Scriptural theology which Walther, Stoeckhardt, Pieper and others so strenuously opposed. The ACDP report is also a direct attack upon the *Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod*. In sending the ACDP report to the Missouri clergy, President Behnken wrote: "The *Praesidium*, upon receipt of the Com-

mittee's report, gave careful thought and study to it and came to the conclusion to accept it, to make it its own . . . Dr. William Arndt, the author of the essays in question, the Faculty of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Mo., and the Presidents of the Districts that heard and accepted the essays wholeheartedly consent to this report of the *Praesidium*." Will the Missouri Synod at the Houston convention now haul down its banner and also completely surrender to the liberal, Romanizing, Wartburg theology?

Will Missourians now be taught to look upon the Bible as an obscure book? Dare we say with the ACDP: "There is disagreement between some views *because the Scriptures are not clear on those points*"? Dare we subscribe to the statement of the ACDP that the "doctrines" (!!!) of Anti-christ, etc., "are not so clearly revealed in Scripture that we have the right to condemn the views expressed as false doctrine"?

Referring specifically to the Iowan position now being espoused and advocated in the ACDP report, Dr. Walther said: "*Whatever is not 'clearly and unmistakably' revealed in Scripture is not revealed at all. To maintain that certain doctrines of faith are indeed revealed in God's Word but not altogether clearly and unmistakably is nothing else than a denial of God's wisdom and goodness and blasphemy against God, or a denial of the divine origin of Scripture. Tertium non datur . . . Iowa proceeds from the principle that Scripture is obscure and easily misunderstood also in doctrines of faith . . . This is an error of truly frightful consequences.*" Walther then shows how the Reformed apply this principle to the clear Words of Institution of the Lord's Supper and how the Arminians have applied it to many other clear teachings of Scripture, the Holy Trinity, the personal union of Christ, etc., etc. "From this long list of supposedly unclear and easily misunderstood doctrines contained in Holy Scripture we see that the principle, that Holy Scripture contains doctrines of faith which are not clearly and unmistakably revealed and must therefore be reckoned among the open questions, leads not only to unionism and syncretism but also to crass skepticism and indifference to doctrine. Yes, it finally leads to naked unbelief and in the end prepares the way for the principle of well-known scoffers, that every one can be saved after his own fashion." Dr. Walther then closed with this prayer: "May the Lord preserve our dear Church

against the inroads of the inane theory which is at the present time a cancerous sore in the theology and Church of our former fatherland and which, if it would find entrance here, would gnaw at the root of the freshly budding tree of our American Church and cause it to wither again!" (*Lehre und Wehre*, 14, p. 303ff.)

You, the members of the Missouri Synod, will help cause that prayer to be heard or remain unheard by your action or inaction in this matter. You cannot, you dare not brush all this aside as though it did not concern you. This is not a matter of personalities, and sooner or later all of us shall stand before our God. It is true, you may for a little while be able to retain the pure Gospel in your immediate circle. But eventually you and your congregation and your children will lose it, unless you take positive action against every deviation from the truth of God's Word, no matter how insignificant and unimportant it may seem in the eyes of men; unless you take the necessary steps that the future pastors of your congregation are conscientiously trained to hold fast to the confession of pure doctrine with iron tenacity.

Doctrinal and confessional fidelity to *every* Word of God is the only reliable basis of hope for future success. The opposite course spells ruin and decay. It may be slow, but it is sure. In its report the Presidium says: "Dr. Arndt and the Missouri Synod are just as vitally concerned with maintaining the TRUTH OF GOD'S WORD as are the signers of Memorial 609." If that be true — and we believe that many who have become involved in this matter may have erred out of weakness and ignorance — then we would in all humility and charity earnestly plead with all who have subscribed to this report **TO REPUDIATE THE UN-SCRIPTURAL LIBERAL IOWAN POSITION ADVOCATED IN THIS REPORT** and return to the rock from which the Missouri Synod was hewn and thus by the grace of God help to restore unity of faith to the Missouri Synod.

CORRECTION There is only one price, \$1.75, on Krey's Devotional Catechism. Quantity prices mentioned in November issue of our journal are in error.

IMPORTANT NOTICE An extensive Review of the Revised Standard Version, the Bible of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., will appear in the March-April issue of the Confessional Lutheran. We suggest that orders for extra copies of this combined issue (24 pages) be placed NOW. (Write for prices on quantities!)

In view of the importance of the above announcement, we shall at the same time repeat the offer made in our December issue, to accept eight-month subscriptions to the *Confessional Lutheran*, beginning with the combined March-April issue at the special rate of \$1.00, provided they are received by March 1. This applies to new subscriptions only.

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MOTTO: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding ought of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

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THE REVISED STANDARD VERSION

The Bible of the

National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.

By PAUL H. BURGDORF

I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The average Bible reader knows that the Sacred Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were written in Hebrew and Greek respectively. It has therefore been necessary to translate them into the various languages of the world.

The earliest attempt at such translation is represented by the Greek version of the Old Testament commonly known as the *Septuagint* (LXX), which existed already before the New Testament was written. It owes

its name (Septuagint: Greek for "Seventy") to the story, now discredited, although there is a kernel of truth in it, that it was prepared by 72 translators, imported through the Jewish high priest Eleazar at the instigation of King Ptolemy II, for the royal library in Alexandria, Egypt. As far as can be ascertained today, it is the composite work of successive translators, begun about 285 B.C. and completed before 130 B.C. This translation remains to this day an invaluable aid to the Bible scholar in a number of respects, for instance in helping to determine the pure text of the O. T., the original manuscripts of which (called autographs) have been lost

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long ago, although we have quite reliable
copies of them dating back many centuries.
Quotations from the Old Testament in the
New Testament, also by our Lord Himself,
are frequently by way of the Septuagint.

Among the most notable ancient trans-
lations of the whole Bible is the Latin version
known as the *Vulgate* (meaning "vulgar,"
although not in the offensive sense which
that word has acquired today, but in its
original sense of *common* — from its common
use in the Latin Church) prepared by Jerome
at the close of the 4th century. For Roman
Catholics this version was declared "authen-
tic" by a decree of the Council of Trent in
1546. The only English version of the Bible
which to date has obtained the sanction of
the pope is based on it; it is called the *Douay
Version* because it was originally prepared,
toward the end of the sixteenth century, by
Gregory Martin of the English College of

Douay with the assistance of fellow exiles in
France during the reign of James I, in
1609-10. However, a new Roman Catholic
version, called the *Catholic Confraternity
Bible*, is being prepared today, which, though
it started out to be another translation from
the Latin of the Vulgate, is being made from
the original tongues, plans having been
changed in the midst of the work at the
direction of an encyclical of Pope Pius XII.
(The first eight books of the Catholic Con-
fraternity Bible, Genesis through Ruth, ap-
peared on Sept. 30, 1952, the same day that
saw the publication of the R.S.V.)

Luther's unexcelled German translation
(N. T. completed in 1522, O. T. in 1534) is
too well known, and its excellencies are too
many, for comment here.

The first English version of the Scriptures
(based on the Vulgate) was that of *John
Wiclif*, completed about 1380. The first Eng-
lish version from the original Hebrew and
Greek was the translation of *William Tyndale*,
1524-1536. It was followed by the *Miles
Coverdale Bible* ("out of the Douche and
Latin," i. e., the German of Luther and the
Zurich Bible and the Vulgate), in 1535; a
compilation of the last-named two by John
Rogers (alias Matthew) known as *Matthew's
Bible*, in 1537; the *Great Bible* (so named
because of its great proportions), in 1539,
and Richard Taverner's version of the same
year; *The Geneva Bible*, 1560; and the
Bishop's Bible, 1568.

Competing with all of the above named
English versions and others of the Elizabethan
era, when English literature was at its height,
the famous *King James* or *Authorized Version*
of 1611 appeared under royal authority of
the British sovereign, King James I, as the
titular head also of the Anglican Church, and
was by him "appointed to be read in the
churches" of England. As its title page
shows, it owes something to each of the
"former versions" in English mentioned
above, having retained felicitous turns of
speech and apt expressions from these
sources and thus embodying phrases that had
stood the test of public usage, the test of
time. To insure accuracy, the translators,
numbering fifty-four, were bound to observe
strict rules in the prosecution of their task;
and it was provided that each of the trans-
lators passed upon the work of every other
man in the company. For almost three and
a half centuries The Authorized Version has
held its place as the Bible of the English-
speaking world. Its directness, the beauty
and rare grace and purity of its diction, its

dignified and elegant simplicity, its reverential spirit and attitude, have endeared it to millions of hearts and have made it the most popular of all English books, "the noblest monument of English prose." Those who have attempted revisions of it have expressed admiration of "its dignity, its power, its happy turns of expression . . . the music of its cadences, and the felicity of its rhythm," and admit that "we owe to it an incalculable debt." The RSV translators, too, have had to accord to the AV that kind of praise. They have said: "It must be recognized that it is difficult to produce in the English of the twentieth century a Bible translation which has the melodiousness, and in great passages the majestic diapason, of the English of Shakespeare's time." (*An Introduction to the RSV, NT*, p. 62.) And again: It has been, "to the mind of most people, *the English Bible*." (P. 9.) And still again: "The noble language of the King James Version so endeared it to generations of English-speaking people that it has become the most widely used translation of the Bible, and by far the most widely read English book." (P. 15.)

Citing the RSV Revision Committee again, they say (*Intr. RSV, O.T.*, p. 15.62) concerning the greatness of the King James Version of the Bible which lies in its superb literary qualities, that its language "is infused with an elevation and dignity that has never been surpassed in English speech." And again: "Rather than a child of seventeenth century English, it is parent of the English of today. Its lucid clarity has established itself as the standard of good writing; its great phrases have passed over into common usage; many of its figures of speech have established themselves in the language as indigenous English!" They have, moreover, well said that the King James' translators "possessed a remarkable feeling for words." "They were sensitive to the rhythm and the accent of the original Hebrew, and they frequently rendered poetic passages like the Psalter with extraordinary fidelity to the Hebrew text." (Consider e.g. the Twenty-Third Psalm and other great Psalms!) Its very style is "the style of the Hebrew, and of the Koine Greek of New Testament times." All of this is high praise. But the RSV Committee has had to accord the AV even greater praise than this. While acknowledging the supreme merit of its commonly recognized literary style, it has said: "What is almost as commonly overlooked is that it owes its merit, not at all to seventeenth century Eng-

lish . . . but to *its faithful rendering of the original*." (Our emphasis.)

Yet, revision of the Authorized Version has been urged.

There, are, broadly speaking, two grounds which have been advanced as reasons for a revision of the AV. The first of these is the discovery of previously unknown manuscript copies of various parts of the Holy Scriptures and, as far as the New Testament is concerned, of a mass of other writings, — legal and business documents, wills, contracts, letters, written in the commonly spoken Greek idiom, the vernacular (the *Koine*) in which the New Testament was written; all of which should, of course, shed some light on the New Testament and make for a better understanding of the Greek idiom and of the original Biblical text in which it was written. Most notable of all recent discoveries was that of a manuscript of the Book of Isaiah dating back perhaps to the year 100 B.C. among copies of portions of the Old Testament found in the Dead Sea area in 1947. This copy of the Book of Isaiah is 1000 years older than any other Hebrew text known to have survived. The most notable thing about all such findings, however, is the fact that they have led to but a few very minor changes in the texts with which scholars have been working since mediaeval times and, thus, also to the confirmation of the reliability of these texts — chiefly the so-called Received Text, which is the basis of the Authorized Version as well as of Luther's unexcelled German translation. As for the second consideration urged as a ground for revision of the Authorized Version — changes in the English language during the last three centuries, resulting in antiquated, archaic or obsolescent spellings, words, meanings, and constructions in the AV, — the reasonableness of this consideration must be to some extent recognized. We shall have to speak of it again later on.

Contrary to an impression perhaps prevailing among many Bible readers today, there have during the last 100 years been repeated attempts at modern revisions of the Bible in English.

The first attempt to revise the AV dates back to the latter part of the past century. In 1870 the Convocation of Canterbury (Church of England) authorized a revision of the AV and organized a committee of British scholars to undertake the task. A committee of American scholars, organized a year later, was by invitation associated with it through correspondence. The British Committee accepted only such recommendations

of the American Committee as were approved by a two-thirds vote of the former. It was agreed, however, to publish the other recommendations as an appendix. On the other hand, the American Committee agreed not to issue an edition of its own for a period of 14 years. The New Testament of the English RV appeared in 1881 (about three million copies being sold within one year of publication), the Old Testament revision was completed in 1884, and the entire Revised Version, bound in a single volume appeared in 1885. At the expiration of the period agreed upon, in 1901, the American Revised Version, called the *American Standard Version* or Bible, appeared. This version was published by Thomas Nelson and Sons.

Both the English RV and its variant, the ASV, are marked by infringements on Christian doctrine as contained in the original Hebrew and Greek texts, especially in prophetic, Messianic passages of the Old Testament. The words of Job 19, 25-27 "Yet in my flesh shall I see God" are made to read "Then without my flesh shall I see God," — a clear violation of the Hebrew text and its context. In the ASV there is an outrageous Unitarian marginal note to John 9, 38, where it is said of the man born blind that, when Jesus asked him, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" he, after a moment of hesitation and questioning, replied, "Lord, I believe," and "worshiped" Him. The vitiating note reads as follows: "The Greek word denotes an act of reverence, whether paid to a creature (as here) or to the Creator (see chap. 4, 20)." (Our emphasis.) Such grave faults made the RV and the ASV unacceptable to honest Christian readers, whatever merits they may otherwise have had.

That the RV and the ASV proved generally unacceptable is shown by the fact that other translations soon appeared. Among these was the *Moffatt Bible*. (James) Moffatt's New Testament translation appeared in 1913, and his Old Testament in 1924ff. Moffatt's spirit is shown by what he says in his Introduction to the New Testament. Here this liberal modern scholar announced that the work of translation is now "freed from the influence of the theory of verbal inspiration." His Bible is full of errors. He doctored and watered down the actual words of the Holy Scriptures so as to eliminate the deity of Christ as much as possible. Displaying little reverence for the original text of Holy Scripture, he called Joseph "the father of Jesus" in Mt. 1, 16. He did not hesitate to translate John 1, 1 ("the Word was God"):

"The Logos was divine." The words of Simon Peter, in his great confession in the name of all Apostles, in John 6:69 ("Thou art . . . the Son of the Living God") are made to read: "You are the holy one of God." Christ's words in the institution of the Holy Supper are changed to: "This means my body."

Among a veritable flood of translations of the New Testament which made their appearance in recent years is that of Edgar J. Goodspeed, of the University of Chicago. His translation, too, exhibits the modernist's approach to the Bible. Among his perversions of the truth of Holy Scripture is his interpretation of the term "righteousness of God" in Romans, which he in his slanted translation renders "the uprightness of God."

We have made a point of mentioning the work of both Moffatt and Goodspeed because they also were members of the committee which produced the Revised Standard Version, Moffatt serving as its executive secretary until his death in 1944.

The English Revised Version and the American Standard Version were recognized as being quite unsatisfactory (though on other grounds than those which we have emphasized) also by the group of scholars and their following who eventually undertook the task of producing the Revised Standard Version (Cp. *An Introduction to the RSV*, NT, pp. 11f.; 53.)

Unlike other versions before it, inclusive of the English RV of 1881, the American Standard Version of 1901 was copyrighted by its publishers, Thomas Nelson and Sons. In 1928 this copyright was transferred to the International Council of Religious Education, representing an association of churches in the United States and Canada, which was considering a revision of the ASV to be known as the *Revised Standard Version*. The RSV is a revision of the ASV. "The ASV was its basic English text." (Cp. *Intr. RSV*, OT, pp. 13.20.23.) The "American Standard Bible Committee" began its work in 1930, suspended it in 1932 because of a lack of funds, and in 1937 was formally authorized to proceed with the work by the International Council of Religious Education, an adequate budget being provided. The first text of the New Testament of this version appeared in 1946, Thomas Nelson and Sons of New York, Toronto, and Edinburgh being retained as publishers. Before the Old Testament could be completed the International Council of Religious Education became the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States

of America, by absorption into that body at its organization in 1950 as the successor of the former Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America and a number of other affiliates. Upon completion the entire RSV of the Bible was therefore published, under a copyright of the Division of Christian Education of the NCCC in the USA, by Thomas Nelson and Sons, in 1952. The American Bible Society, which since its foundation in 1816, like the British and Foreign Bible Society (org. 1804), had by its constitution been permitted to circulate only the canonical books of the Scriptures without notes or explanations of any kind, and which hitherto strictly adhered to the wishes of its founders and benefactors who have endowed it with millions of dollars, was prevailed upon to amend its charter so that it could begin circulating the RSV, notes and all.

When it is said (as it is said) that the RSV is "an authorized version" or the "official Bible," it must be realized that such expressions are quite meaningless when used by themselves (as they are being used by its promoters). Their meaning can only be that publication of the RSV was "authorized by vote of the NCCCUSA in 1951" (Preface, O. T., p. v; *An Intr. to the RSV, NT*, p. 11), and all that can be honestly claimed for it is that it is the official Bible of the NCCCUSA. The NCCCUSA has copyrighted its translation. Royalties from the sale of this particular version can be expected to flow into the coffers of the NCCCUSA for the further promotion of its particular religious bias.

What sort of an organization is the NCCCUSA? It is an arrogant, modernistic, socialistic organization with a "Christian" veneer, which serves as a stamping ground for its liberalistic leaders and as a common agency for the conglomeration of churches which it represents.

The arrogance of the NCCCUSA is shown by its very name, — "The National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A." (Our emphasis.) The preamble to its constitution refers to Christ as "divine Lord and Savior."

That its leaders ardently pursue a socialistic interpretation of "the Kingdom of God," a mere social gospel, can be readily seen by their well considered public utterances, repeated over and over again, even to a point of nausea. Dr. Francis J. McConnell, a former President of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, now perpetuated by the NCCCUSA, has said: "Some students can hardly restrain their sentiments at the

tendency to deify Jesus, since that tendency seems to rob Him of His supreme value as a human ideal. . . . Is not this tendency to deify Jesus more heathen than Christian?" (*The Christlike God*, p. 14f.) George A. Butt-rick, another former president of the Council, has blasphemously said of the atonement, the central doctrine of the Christian faith: "Jesus was not a sinner. He had done nothing to incur God's wrath. And if God dealt with Him as if He were a sinner and the greatest sinner, then we must say of God (as a cynical Frenchman did say of these penal theologies): 'Your God is my devil.'" (*Great Themes of the Christian Faith*, 1930, p. 18.) Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, who was honored as the Council's radio preacher over a period of many years, has said: "Of course, I do not believe in the Virgin Birth. . . . I do not know any intelligent Christian minister who does." (Letter to H. U. Fisher, in *Christian Beacon*, July 24, 1947.) Again, he has said: "I believe in the divinity of Jesus Christ with all my faculties if we can come to an understanding about what we mean by *divinity*." (It will be noted that modernists very advisedly use the word "divinity" where we speak of the *deity* of Christ and where we mean precisely that.) He explains: "If someone says, Well, we all have some of that divine spark in us; we all have some goodness, truth, love, and therefore on that basis the divinity of Jesus differs from ours in degree, indeed, but not in kind, I answer, Are you afraid of that conclusion? Of course the divinity of Jesus differs from ours in degree but not in kind. . . . To say therefore that God was in Christ seems to me no theological puzzle at all. I think God was in my mother, the source of the loveliness that blessed us there!" (*Hope of the World*, p. 103.) In *The Modern Use of the Bible* Dr. Fosdick has said (p. 104): "I do not believe in the physical return of Jesus," and he disavowed the great hope of believers by saying: "I believe in the persistence of personality through death, but I do not believe in the resurrection of the flesh." (P. 98.) The International Council of Religious Education, which merged with the Federal Council in the NCCCUSA and took with it into that body the copyright of the American Standard Version, of which the Revised Standard Version is the new variant, printed in the minutes of its fiftieth anniversary convention book the expressed amazement of Dr. Rippey that its present program should be called into question. He said it was the fruitage of the best minds over a long period of thought and planning, and

"he saw no reason why the 'store front' sects with their slaughter house theology" (he meant the atonement through the blood of Christ!) "should trouble men of wisdom and of poise." (Quoted from the *Christian Standard* in *The RSV: An Appraisal*, by R. C. Foster, p. 4.)

That the program of the Council is patently socialistic, envisioning an economy in which the means of production are owned by the state rather than by individuals, can be best seen from such writings as those of the widely known "evangelist," E. Stanley Jones. Its real philosophic basis is that of John Dewey, Norman Thomas, Karl Marx, and other secular prophets rather than that of the prophets of Israel and its Messiah. It uses Christian terminology merely to give prestige to its views.

What has been said of the NCCCUSA in general, is true also of its "American Standard Bible Committee," which ultimately consisted of 32 members and worked in two sections, one dealing with the Old Testament and the other with the New Testament. In addition to these the successive chairman and general secretaries of the International Council of Religious Education (Division of Christian Education of the NCCCUSA) were members *ex officio* of this committee and were charged with the special responsibility for "matters of general policy, finance, and public relations." In an endeavor to secure the support of as many churches as possible, an "Advisory Board" of "fifty representatives of the cooperating denominations" was, moreover, enlisted.

Like the leaders of the NCCCUSA generally, the men who translated this Bible of the NCCCUSA are modernistic, liberal scholars. Dr. Carl McIntire, Pastor of the Bible Presbyterian Church in Collingswood, N. J., and president of the (fundamentalist) International Council of Christian Churches, has vouched for the fact that there was not a man on the RSV translating committee who would be considered a fundamentalist or evangelical in the historic sense of the word. (*The New Bible, Revised Standard Version — Why Christians Should Not Accept It*, p. 12.) And Dr. Sam. M. Zwemer, noted missionary to the Mohammedans, now deceased, in the *Presbyterian* of August 15, 1946, has quoted Dr. N. B. Stonehouse of the Westminster Theological Seminary as saying, similarly, in *The Presbyterian Guardian*, June 25, 1946, that "All the scholars who determined the final form of the RSV belong to the Modernist camp." (Cp. *Concordia Theological Monthly*,

Dec., 1946, p. 929f.) Prof. Abdel Ross Wentz, of the (ULC) Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg, Penn., the only Lutheran on the committee, (N. T. Section), shares the views of his particular ecclesiastical body, according to which the Holy Scriptures are not in all of their parts and words the infallible Word of God. The spirit of Moffatt and Goodspeed has already been characterized above. The latter, in his *Life of Jesus* (pp. 223-227) denies the bodily resurrection of Jesus and reduces His appearances after Easter to so many spiritual experiences of His disciples. He says "Their memory of Him quickened to a presence!" and he ridicules the bodily resurrection as a "Pharisaic idea." Five of the members of the RSV committee were of Yale Divinity School, a center of socialism and modernism, among them its Dean, Dr. Luther A. Weigle, who was Chairman and a member of both the Old Testament and New Testament Sections. (It was at Yale and at Union Theological Seminary, New York, that nearly all meetings at least of the O. T. Section of the Committee were held.) When Dr. Weigle was president of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America he was asked what that super church-organization meant by its acceptance of Christ as "Savior and Lord." His reply was that member churches were never asked what they meant by this. He has been affiliated with organizations cited by the Congressional Committee on Un-American Activities as front organizations set up by the Communist Party in the recent civil war in Spain. He also signed the (Communistic) "World Tomorrow" Poll and voted in favor of Socialism, for a cooperative commonwealth instead of capitalism. Dr. Clarence T. Craig, also of Yale, was in the *Southern Presbyterian Journal* reported to have led a vigorous attack by liberal members of the American Theological Committee on the formulation of the invitation "to all Christian bodies throughout the world which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Savior" in 1945 when the World Council of Churches was in process of formation. He rejects the doctrines both of Christ's pre-existence and of His post-existence as mythological. "Why," he asks, "should the myths employed in the New Testament ever have been taken over by reasoned theology?" (*The Church News-Letter*, January, 1947.) Five further members of the RSV committee were of Union Theological Seminary in New York City, a hotbed of modernism and socialism. Among these was Dr. Walter Russell Bowie, who worked on the New Testament.

His outright advocacy of the dishonest device of mental reservation in confessing one's belief (or unbelief) is illustrated by his saying: "A man can say the Apostles' or the Nicene Creed and rejoice to say it, even though he may be frankly uncertain whether the Virgin Birth was demonstrable fact or only a reverent and lovely tradition of the early Church." (Cp. Th. Graebner, *The Problem*, etc., p. 200.) Dr. Bowie is a well-known radical who enjoys the dubious distinction of having been named on no less than fifteen different Communist or Communist-front organizations. Among these has been the Citizens' Committee to Free Earl Browder, cited as a Communist organization by Attorney General Francis Biddle, and as a Communist front by the Congressional Committee on Un-American Activities. Inclusion in the Old Testament Section of the RSV committee of Professor Harry M. Orlinsky, of the Jewish Institute of Religion, New York, could hardly be expected to serve to lessen its Unitarian emphasis (denial of the deity of Christ) in dealing with passages referring to the Messiah.

But what interest, someone may ask, should liberals of the calibre such as we are dealing with, be expected to have in the Bible at all? This question is easily answered. The best way to destroy Christian faith is by meeting it on its own ground, — Holy Scripture, which is the foundation of Christian faith. Raise all manner of doubt possible about it in the minds of believers. That is the way Satan has worked from the beginning. "Yea, hath God said?" is the question by which he brought about man's original forfeiture of paradise. And this is still his way of doing things. There is an old saying to the effect that 'Wherever God the Lord builds a church, the devil builds a chapel next to it, — indeed, often he builds one right into it.' When immediate outright total victory is not possible, religious radicalism resorts to getting Christians to make concessions, and thus weans them progressively away from the ancient body of faith. One of their own number, Dr. Gilmore has said, "We win by compromise," and he illustrated this by saying: "Among Episcopalians the doctrine of the Virgin Birth is being dissolved, but that of the Incarnation survives. Later on it will be seen that the doctrine of the Incarnation must be surrendered — indeed, that its surrender was inevitable from the outset and is delayed only by ecclesiastical reluctance to do more than compromise!" (Cp. Th. Graebner, *The Problem*, p. 199.) Liberals, more-

over, have the unbecoming habit of imposing on the innocent and on the gullible by invariably laying claim to superior scholarship. Claims made in connection with the translation and promotion of the RSV are by no means an exception to this rule of liberal warfare. (Cp., e.g., the companion volume *Intr. to the RSV, NT*, p. 11 — "the best results of modern scholarship"; the footnotes in the RSV; and endless statements in the promotional material connected with its advertising campaign.)

The New Testament section of the RSV was published in 1946. Nine members of the 32-man American Standard Bible Committee worked on it. (Cp. *Intr. to RSV, NT*, p. 13.) However, when the Old Testament was completed, and the entire Bible published, in 1952, about eighty changes were made in the original version of the New Testament section.

In its Preface to the New Testament of 1946, in the somewhat more extended Preface to the complete Bible published in 1952, but especially in the two companion pamphlets, titled *An Introduction to the RSV of the Old Testament* and *An Introduction to the RSV of the New Testament*, the RSV committee of translators has expressed itself as to the "spirit" of its work, and the main principles by which it has been guided. Now, we are to try the spirits that come knocking at our door in the name of God. That is what we propose to do as regards the spirit of the RSV, on the basis of the translation itself, and on the basis of what its translators and promoters have themselves further said about their work.

II

AN EVALUATION

In evaluating the Revised Standard Version, the Bible of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., we shall confine ourselves to basic issues, not entering on endless details which might profitably be discussed.

The external appearance of this publication is commendable. This is true especially of its chapter division and spacing, of its paragraphing and its verse indication. Poetic sections and rhythmic passages (40% of the Old Testament) are shown as such by their arrangement, as is also the division of the Psalms into five "Books." The typography is excellent and the workmanship such that in a quick reading nothing more than the missing of the first letter in the word "father" in Is. 38, 5 in the Old Testament, and of a

hyphen at the end of a line in the New Testament (the last full line of Rom. 11, 12) caught our eye.

In view of the fact that much is being made of its modern appearance, it has been said: "This new version comes to us looking like a book — not like *the Book*. . . . Even in its boasted format this book suggests the modern theology which it with subtlety presents." (Alexander Fraser, in *Introduction to The RSV of the New Testament: An Appraisal* by R. C. Foster, 1946, p. 4.) "A conservative-looking maroon buckram volume on the outside," *Time* magazine (which can hardly be said to hold a brief for conservatism) has said, "The new Bible has some surprises for the conservative reader inside." We believe that the greatest necessity which confronts us with reference to it at the moment is to warn against some of the grave errors which are embodied in it. After all, the most salubrious medicine becomes the most potent potion of death when some vile poison has been mixed into it. Such a draught is infinitely more dangerous than a dose of pure toxin, properly labeled, because it will not be shunned as readily. This is the sort of thing with which we are confronted in this New Bible and in the spirit that lurks behind it.

The Bible does not have as much to fear from its open enemies as it does from certain people who pose as its friends. It is at the hands of these that this most abused book in the world receives its worst treatment. Modernism has long since made it its business to render Christian faith uncertain by its "interpretations" of Holy Writ, but in our day it has reached new heights of boldness and does not hesitate to lay hands on the sacred volume itself and to tamper with its very text. This is what has been done in the case of the RSV.

In recording its own convictions with regard to the answer to the question, "What is the Bible?" the RSV committee in the best neo-orthodox fashion confesses no more than that the Word of God may be "discerned" through its use, because that Word is, somehow or another, "in" it. (Cp. Preface, and *Intr. to the RSV, NT*, pp. 13; 64; 70.) Of the inspired Apostolic writings of St. Paul it is said that they were "private" letters to his churches and that they were not published for a generation. (P. 34.) Especially in its *Introduction to the RSV of the Old Testament* does the NCCUSA Revision Committee reveal its attitude toward the Bible. Of the Book of Ecclesiastes it says (p. 74): "The

writer does not deny the power or existence of God, yet his is not the God of Judaism but a ruthless and capricious Fate. Logically we should expect him to recommend suicide since he had nothing to fear beyond the grave. . . . The extreme scepticism of the book is alleviated somewhat by a few interpolations and editorial additions. These and the ascription to Solomon help to account for its inclusion in the canon." "By way of decent caution" they have the following to say (p. 77) concerning our use of the books of the prophets: "There are at least two reservations which the modern preacher may properly allow himself in preaching from the prophets. The repeated reference to the harlotries and adulteries of Judah and/or Israel does not furnish serviceable metaphors for contemporary edification. And one is struck by the savage and vindictive vengeance visited upon enemies round about. The sword of the Lord is constantly drunk with the blood of Edom and the like. It may be that the writer of Hosea 13, 16 was not the tender and forgiving author of the earlier part of the book; but the *brutal hope*" (these are the words by which this passage of the holy Book is misrepresented — our emphasis) "that the little children of Samaria may be 'dashed in pieces' and 'their pregnant women ripped open' leaves something to be desired ethically."

How these Bible-butchers would proceed with a reconstruction of the text of Holy Scripture and a rearrangement of its books and/or portions of the same if they were left to carry out their own notion of things is likewise indicated by what they themselves have said in their *Introduction to the RSV of the Old Testament*. On page 39 they have said: "The earliest well preserved Hebrew narrative prose is found in the remarkable account of the events preceding and attending the Coronation of Solomon, II Sam. 11; I Kings 2." Of the Books of Nehemiah and Ezra they say (p. 40): "The Babylonian Jew, Nehemiah, who can scarcely have known much Hebrew, dictated his memoirs to a scribe who knew Hebrew well but was unable to keep Aramaic sentence order and syntax out. The other Babylonian Jew, Ezra, obviously knew Hebrew better but spoiled his Hebrew by introducing many Aramaisms in vocabulary, morphology, and syntax." Concerning the date of the composition of Job the workings of the mind of the committee lead it to say (p. 40): "A date before the middle of the fifth century" (B.C) "is thus very difficult." Of the Book of Daniel they say (p. 40): "The

Hebrew of Daniel shows strong indications of being still later" than the decades immediately following the Greek Conquest, that is, the conquest of the world of his day by Alexander the Great, who died 323 B.C. This alone would, of course, strip the Book of Daniel of most of its prophetic character. The Committee places the Book of Ecclesiastes "among the latest books of the Hebrew Bible," probably in "the early third century B.C." (P. 40f.)

The manner in which the RSV translators have dealt with the sacred volume is one that may accordingly have been expected of them.

In the RSV, first of all, portions of the text itself of Scripture are set aside as though they were not a part of it. Only in footnotes is it (sometimes) said that "authorities, some ancient, add" the portions omitted in the RSV, or words to similar effect. The most noteworthy instances of texts being set aside without proper warrant are to be found in *Mark 16, 9-20* (the whole closing portion of the Gospel) and in *Luke 19b-20* (the last part of the words of Christ in the institution of the Lord's Supper, found also in the parallel accounts of Matthew and Mark and in I Cor. 11). *Mt. 6, 13* (the closing doxology of the Lord's Prayer) has been omitted, as has also *Mark 15, 28* (the record of the fulfillment of the Scripture concerning Christ's being reckoned among the transgressors; cp. Lk. 22, 37). Another portion of text which has been relegated to the footnotes of the RSV is *John 7, 53-8, 11* (the woman taken in adultery). We are well aware as to what critics have to say about the authenticity of some of these texts, especially the last-named; but we are not too disturbed by such criticism. There is infinitely better authority for the least of them than there is e.g. for the endless "corrections" of the RSV which rest on no authority but its own.

In some instances in which a less desirable reading has been chosen in the RSV, as in *Eph. 3, 14f.*, or in *John 6, 69* ("We have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God" in the RSV, as against "We believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God" in the AV) there is not even a footnote in the RSV indicating any variant, so that the uninformed reader is left to wonder where the AV got its (better) reading. This practice of completely omitting reference to its existence, at least in a footnote, is followed also in the case of I John 5, 7 as contained in the AV ("For there are three that bear record in

heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one"). These celebrated words, the most disputed passage in all Scripture, contain the most forceful testimony to the Holy Trinity in the Bible, although that doctrine is well vouched for also by other clear, and certain, texts, — e.g. *Mt. 28, 19*; *II Cor. 13, 13*. The integrity of this verse is well attested e.g. by its having been cited already by Cyprian (d. 258 A.D.) — about 200 years before the oldest of the existing manuscript copies of the New Testament which we have today was written. On the other hand, the RSV did not fail to include under *Mt. 1, 16* the note: "Other ancient authorities read *Joseph, to whom was betrothed the virgin Mary, was the father of Jesus who is called Christ.*" That the RSV could hardly have made use of the best copies of texts of the Holy Scriptures in many instances can be seen even by the reader who is not conversant with this subject for instance by comparing the portion missing in the text of Hebrew 2, 7 in the RSV (cp. footnote there) with *Ps. 8, 6b*, which is quoted in Hebrews.

The critical management of the original text in the RSV of the Old Testament especially shows endless reconstructions by "restorations" from ancient versions, especially the Septuagint, the Samaritan, the Syriac, the Targum, and the Vulgate, by transposition of verses, and outright "corrections." Thus in the Psalter alone there are about fifty "corrections." It is important to note that such "corrections" are made in the text of Holy Scripture itself and that they do not rest on variant readings or even on any rendering of various versions, but that they are pure conjecture, submitted for the actual text of Scripture, on no better authority than that of the RSV translators themselves. In short, the RSV has altered the text of Sacred Scripture by the application to it of the method of "higher criticism." On the other hand, the RSV did not know what to do with *I Sam. 13, 1*, where it left two blank spaces and stated in a footnote that certain numbers concerning Saul or his reign are lacking and have dropped out in the Hebrew original. However, there really is no such difficulty here. The sense of the passage, according to the original Hebrew text is simply that Saul had completed (literally, was "the son of") a year and that it was the year two, or the second year, that he was king over Israel when the event to be described beginning at v. 2 took place.

The next thing we would mention is the matter of *italics*. Such was the reverence of the translators of the AV for the sacred Word, and such was their anxiety to render a translation really true to the original, that when the idiom of the English language seemed to require the insertion of some word not found in the original because the Hebrew or Greek idiom do not tolerate it, they indicated this by placing the word or words supplied in italics. Thus even the reader who is not familiar with the language of the original text can know when this was done. (Example: "The generations from Abraham to David *are* fourteen generations." Mt. 1, 17.) The RSV translators dispensed entirely with this good practice. The reason for this is obvious from an examination of their version: their renderings are often so free that italics would not suffice to indicate their interpretive additions on the one hand and quite frequent omissions on the other hand. (For an example compare Romans 14, 16 in the AV and in the RSV.)

As concerns the actual work of *translation* in the RSV, it must be readily admitted that due to differences in the idiom of various languages there is room within proper bounds for a certain amount of play, of freedom, in any translation. So, for instance, the Greek word (noun) meaning literally *kingly*, a kingly one, in John 4, 46 has been rendered by the precisely corresponding word, *ein Königlicher*, this being possible in the German, by Luther. The AV has rendered the same word by a "nobleman," and "courtier or ruler" are offered as an alternate in the margin of our Bible. The RSV has used the more general term of an "official." Any one of these translations reproduces quite well what the original Greek word says.

It may also be readily admitted that the RSV in numerous places reads better than the AV. As examples of improved readings in the RSV as over against the AV we may adduce the following, chosen more or less at random:—

Exod. 12, 35: The RSV says the people of Israel had "*asked* of the Egyptians jewelry" etc. (Luther: *hatten gefordert* — had asked or demanded.) The AV has translated: "borrowed."

Exod. 12, 37: "Besides women and children." (AV: "Beside children.")

Thanks to more recent archaeological research, we now know that the word which the AV translated "image" in Lev. 26, 30 as well as in several other passages actually means an "incense altar."

Similarly the better reading of the RSV in I Sam. 13, 21 says: "And the charge was a pim . . ." where the AV says: "they had a file." This is a result of more recent archaeological discovery of some hitherto unknown inscribed weights.

Ps. 104, 4 and Hebr. 1, 7. Both the Hebrew and the Greek use one and the same word for "spirit" and for "wind." However, the context makes plain that the figurative "wind" is required here, as in the RSV, rather than "spirits" as the AV has it.

Ps. 127, 2. The RSV "He gives to His beloved in sleep" is no doubt better than the AV's simple "sleep."

Is. 45, 17. The RSV "to all eternity" is certainly better than the AV's "world without end." The similar expression in Eph. 3, 21, which the AV also translated "world without end" (from where it got into many prayers of the Church's common service books), has been translated "for ever and ever" in the RSV.

Mt. 2, 16 is correctly and well rendered "male children" in the RSV as over against the AV's simple "children."

Mt. 26, 27. The RSV has: "Drink of it, all of you" where the AV says: "Drink ye all of it."

In Mt. 26, 45 and its parallel passages, the RSV has nicely put into question form the words of Christ in Gethsemane: "Are you still sleeping and taking your rest?"

Mt. 28, 19. The words of Christ's great commission to the Church are rendered literally: "Make disciples of all nations" in the RSV.

Mk. 7, 19: ". . . (Thus he declared all foods clean.)"

In Lk. 6, 2 the RSV "Turn in the account" is better than the AV "give account."

John 13, 10. At the scene in the foot-washing the words "bathed . . . wash" are well discriminated in the RSV as they are in the Greek, which used two different words here.

In Acts 2, 3 the RSV rightly divided or *distributed* the Pentecostal tongues of fire among the Apostles instead of having the tongues themselves divided or "cloven" as in the AV.

In Hebr. 11, 13 the RSV ". . . not having received what was promised" is better than the not quite so clear rendering of the AV "the promises."

In I Pet. 3, 1 the RSV translation, which says that husbands who are disobedient to the word "may be won without a word by the behavior of the wives" (our emphasis) is better than the AV rendering, "... the word," word here referring not to the Word of God, but to the words of the wife.

One could add such words and expressions as "booths" for "tabernacles" (Mt. 17, 4); "tomb" for "grave," e. g. in John 11, 17 (since we know that the burial-places in question were caves, John 11, 3b) "demons" (the precise Greek word) for "devils" in every case except that of Satan himself; "power" for the old English and now misleading "virtue" in John 9, 46; "grain" for "corn"; etc.

On the other hand, the RSV missed numerous opportunities to improve on the AV where this might well have been done. As an example we may mention the case of Hebr. 12, 17. The sense of this verse is that Esau found no place for a change of mind (or "repentance") in his father, though he sought it carefully with tears. The AV leaves the situation rather unclear by its simply translating "He found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." The RSV is not much better, reading: "For he found no chance to repent, though he sought it with tears." — Another instance is that of Jude 4, which speaks of "certain men crept in unawares" (this AV reading is considerably better than the RSV "admission has secretly been gained by some") "who were before of old ordained to this condemnation . . ." in the words of AV, while the RSV reads, not much better: "long ago designated for this condemnation." The ASV had rendered this passage much better: "Written off beforehand unto this condemnation." — Still another instance is Hebr. 12, 2, which might well be rendered (as it is e. g. rendered in Kenneth Wuest's *Hebrews in the Greek New Testament*): "... who instead of the joy then present with him endured the cross, despising the shame," etc. — Lk. 18, 8 may serve as another example. Both the AV and the RSV omit the definite article which is in the Greek text and which would make the passage read: "When the Son of man comes, will He find that faith on earth?," that is, the kind of faith or trust which the context illustrates.

And then again there are passages where the wording and the phrasing of the AV is definitely superior to the RSV, also in its simplicity.

Suffice it to say that whatever merits the RSV may have, these are far outweighed by

the gravest faults which are inherent in this translation. The RSV translators took the greatest liberties with the text before them. They took the Bible and made of it a book which was as clay in their hands to be molded at will, and by their "scholarly" interpretations they made it say what they wanted it to say and what the Holy Scriptures do not actually say. The classical Greek scholar John A. Scott has said: "The thing in this version which distresses me most is the irreverent disregard for the simple meaning of the original," and again: "The King James Version is immeasurably superior in the knowledge of Greek, in the mastery of English, and, above all, in the honest and docile fidelity to the Greek text." He has especially emphasized also that "a real and vital defect in the RSV is the total failure to grasp the meaning of the Greek tenses." He has by numerous examples documented his critical review, which appeared in the *Classical Weekly*, Jan. 6, 1947. A portion of this review of the RSV was reprinted in the *Concordia Theological Monthly*, Aug., 1947, pp. 617-620. It is worth reading in its entirety. Dr. Samuel M. Zwemer, noted missionary to the Mohammedans, now deceased, in an article in the *Presbyterian* of August 15, 1946 (reprinted in the Dec., 1946, issue of the *Concordia Theological Monthly*, pp. 926-929), has stigmatized the RSV as bearing "the unmistakable marks of Liberalism." He, moreover, refers to an otherwise generally appreciative review of the RSV in the *Presbyterian Guardian* of June 25, 1946, by Prof. N. B. Stonehouse of the Westminster Theological Seminary, who characterizes it as being of a definitely Modernist tendency and on the basis of its translation of Rom. 9, 5 and Jude 5 indicts the scholarship and the ethics of the revisers. Prof. R. C. Foster, Professor of Greek and New Testament at the Cincinnati Bible Seminary has rightly testified (*The RSV: A Reply to Dr. Clarence T. Craig*, The Evangelical Fellowship, Inc., Pittsburgh, Pa., p. 4): "The translators, instead of limiting their work to faithfully translating the text, invaded the field of interpretation and imbedded their radical interpretations in the translation"; and again: "The translators force into the very language of the persons speaking the opinion of the translators that they did not believe that Jesus was actually God in the flesh." (P. 6.) New meanings are smuggled in under familiar labels.

The most extensive criticism of the RSV which has appeared to date is to be found in the publication *Revision or New Translation?*,

a book of 164 pages, by Dr. Oswald T. Allis, noted conservative scholar. (The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Phila., 1948.) Dr. Allis shows that the RSV is in reality a new translation rather than a mere revision of the AV. However, his criticism of it is much more far-reaching than that. His book was necessarily restricted to the New Testament. However, in a later series of articles in *United Evangelical Action* (Sept. 15 to Nov. 15, 1952) he has extended his criticism to the RSV of the Old Testament also.

What we have said in criticism of the text of the RSV is true also of the *footnotes* found in this new version of the Bible.

The committee responsible for the translation of the Bible contained in the RSV has said (*Intr. RSV NT*, p. 22): "The Committee consistently proceeded on the assumption that its duty was to translate the Greek text of the New Testament, not to reconstruct any document or tradition that may have lain behind it. Having determined as best we could the correct text of each passage, we have tried to reproduce the meaning of that text accurately and clearly in acceptable English, and in a style suitable for use in worship. Only where this fundamental purpose seemed to us to demand it have we felt free to depart from the familiar language of the American Standard or King James versions." And again: "No doctrine of the Christian faith has been affected by the revision." (P. 42.) The publishers of the RSV, on the inside front jacket of the Complete Edition of 1952, similarly assert that "it contains no changes in doctrine or fundamental concepts."

Let us see.

The Virgin Birth and the Deity of Christ

In the Messianic prophecy of *Isaiah* 7, 14 the great sign of the Virgin's Son, Immanuel, is removed by the following rendering of the RSV: "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, a *young woman* shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." (Our emphasis.) It is noteworthy that the Septuagint version, the translators of which knew Hebrew as well as Greek, translated the Hebrew word in *Isaiah* (*almah*) with the corresponding Greek word (*parthenos*) for "virgin." Reflecting the influence of later Jewish lexicographers, the Hebrew dictionary of Gesenius (edition Roediger-Robinson) makes the claim that the Hebrew word (*almah*) "is incorrectly rendered" in the Septuagint, and Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament repeats this criticism. However, *this criticism*

strikes the Word of God, with equal force in Mt. 1, 23, where the identical Greek word (*parthenos*), used of Mary also in Lk. 1, 26, is used for the Hebrew word (*almah*) in quoting *Isaiah* 7, 14, as being fulfilled by the birth of the God-Man Jesus Christ of the Virgin Mary. Whom should we accept as the greater authority — God, the Holy Spirit, or these human critics of His Word? A Christian will find this question easy to answer. If anyone does not believe such a clear passage of Scripture, it is certainly to be feared that such a one really does not accept the authority of Holy Scripture at all as the final foundation of Christian faith. — Other instances in which the Hebrew word for "virgin" (*almah*) occurs in the Old Testament are *Genesis* 24, 43, where it is used of Rebecca before her marriage (AV: "virgin"; RSV: "young woman"); *Exodus* 2, 8, where it is used of Miriam, the sister of Moses (AV: "maid"; RSV: "girl"); *Prov.* 30, 19 (AV: "the way of a man with a maid"; RSV: "maiden"), where it is used in contrast with an adulteress. It occurs in the plural form in *Ps.* 46, 1 (Upon or "according to Alamothe"), where it refers to the singing of virgins in the temple service (cp. *Ezra* 2, 65; *Neh.* 7, 67); in *Ps.* 68, 25, where it speaks of virgins (AV: "damsels"; RSV: "maidens") playing timbrels; and in the *Song of Solomon* 1, 3 (AV: "virgins"; RSV: "maidens"), where it is used of virgins at a king's court and in the retinue of a regal bride. — Luther, who remains unsurpassed among translators of the Holy Scripture into the language of their day, has devoted considerable space to a characteristic and convincing discussion of the celebrated *Isaiah* passage and in particular of the word "virgin" in it. (St. Louis Edition, XX, 1801-1807 and 2091-2109.) He challenged anyone to show him that the word used here in *Isaiah* means merely a young woman and not a virgin, and he offered 100 florins for the accomplishment of such an impossible feat. The noted exegete G. Stoeckhardt, in his *Commentary on Isaiah*, Chapters 1-12 (Concordia Publishing House, 1902, p. 84) has aptly remarked: "Hebrew philology has made considerable strides since Luther's days. But Luther could also, if he were living today, keep the 100 florins for himself." — Asked by Kenneth Dole, a reporter for the *Washington, D. C. Post*, why the words "young woman" were used in *Isaiah* 7, 14, Dean Luther A. Weigle, RSV committee chairman, replied: "'Young woman' was used simply because that's what the Hebrew means. You can take it for granted that whatever is printed there is what the original language said. We

can't be influenced by what people like or don't like in the way the words affect their theology." When Mr. Dole asked why a footnote then says "or virgin," Dr. Weigle replied: "Simply because it was the traditional word. We wouldn't put anything in a footnote that was remote from the truth." (*The New Bible*, by Carl McIntire, p. 3.) However, in their *Introduction to the RSV of the New Testament* the translators of this version have had to testify: "When we translate an Old Testament quotation in the New Testament, we are making a translation of a translation." (P. 23.) And their translation of the translation of the Old Testament quotation in Mt. 1, 23 reads (correctly): "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel." (Our emphasis.) Thus this committee of modern translators has had to testify against its own rendering in its translation of the Old Testament passage Is. 7, 14. — What has been said above about the influence of later Jewish lexicographers may be illustrated by what the one Jewish member of the RSV Committee, Prof. Harry M. Orlinsky of the Jewish Institute of Religion, New York, has written in *An Introduction to the RSV of the Old Testament*, p. 30 (our emphasis): "Early in the second century A.D., Aquila, a convert to Judaism, made an independent and unique Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible. He incorporated the kind of Jewish interpretation which was current in his day, and he avoided the Christological elements which had been introduced" (?) "in the Septuagint text. Thus Aquila rendered the Hebrew word *hal-mah* in Isaiah 7, 14 literally, 'the young woman' in place of the word 'virgin' which the Christians had substituted for it." (?) — To be real exact, both Isaiah 7, 14 and Mt. 1, 23 have the definite article before the word "virgin," so that one might render it "the virgin," recalling the promise of the woman's seed in Gen. 3, 15. — Not only the Septuagint, but also the Vulgate and the Syriac, versions on which the RSV otherwise leans quite heavily, require the translation "virgin." But the RSV does not so much as mention these "ancient authorities" here. A generation ago, when the controversy between fundamentalists and modernists had reached its height in Reformed circles, Dr. Robert Dick Wilson, noted scholar in the field of Semitic language, in an article on the word "virgin" in Isaiah 7, 14, came to the conclusion that "the language is not the difficulty. The great and only difficulty lies in disbelief of predictive prophecy and in the almighty power of God:

or in the desire to throw discredit upon the divine Sonship of Jesus." (Cp. *United Evangelical Action*, Nov. 15, 1952, p. 10.)

Of a cloth with the RSV rendering of Is. 7, 14 is its rendering of Luke 1, 34, where Mary is made to say to the angel Gabriel: "How can this be, since I have no husband?" Actually, Mary did not say that. She knew that many a girl had become an unmarried mother in her day and before, even as it has happened an untold number of times since. What Holy Scripture does report Mary as saying is something wholly different, as correctly translated in the AV: "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" The word used here in St. Luke is the same word used of Joseph by the Holy Spirit in Mt. 1, 25, where it is said of him, as the RSV also correctly translated at this point, that he "knew her not."

In setting forth its "guiding principles" the RSV committee of translators has stated (*Intr. RSV, NT*, p. 56): "One of the great issues which the present revisers faced was whether or not to retain the second person singular, 'thou,' with its correlative forms, 'thee,' 'thy,' 'thine,' and the verb endings 'est' and 'edst.' After two years of debate and experiment it was decided to abandon these forms and to follow modern usage, except in language addressed to God." Accordingly the translators abandoned as "language addressed to God" language addressed to Christ. A great issue, indeed! The differentiating "you" which sets men apart from God has been used of Christ in the Gospel according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; in the two instances in which He is directly addressed in Acts 1, 6 and 9, 5; and in the Messianic passages of the Old Testament. (Cp., e.g., Ps. 2, 7-9: "You are my son, today I have begotten you," etc.) By some inconsistency this device is not carried through in quotations of Messianic passages from the Old Testament in the New Testament. (Cp. e.g. the three quotations from Ps. 2 in Acts 13, 33; Hebr. 1, 5; 5, 5.) By another inconsistency the differentiating "you" has been retained in the Messianic quotation found in Acts 13, 47. (By still another inconsistency "thy" king is used of the daughter of Zion in the quotation of a Messianic passage from the Old Testament in John 12, 15, while "your" king is retained in the parallel passage in Mt. 21, 5. "Thou" is likewise retained for the mystic Jerusalem from above in Gal. 4, 27.) That the purpose of the RSV translators was to establish such a differentiation as that of which we

have spoken has been admitted by Prof. Clarence T. Craig, a member of the translating committee. In the June, 1947, issue of the *Methodist Challenge*, a strong editorial was featured which charged that the deity of Christ was 'watered down' in this new version by the use of the word 'you' in referring to Him while 'thou' was always used with reference to God. To this Dr. Craig replied: "Would you have casual bystanders address Jesus in His historical life on earth as if they believed in the Trinitarian theology of the Nicene Creed? Would you have the disciples, described by evangelists as without understanding, speak as if *they* at *that time* ascribed deity to Christ?" (This despite such confessions as those of the disciples in Mt. 14, 33, of Nathanael in John 1, 49, of Peter in Mt. 16, 16; of Thomas in John 20, 28; and again of all the disciples in John 16, 30; and even after the resurrection, in Acts 1, 5, and after the ascension, on the Damascus road, in Acts 9, 5!) Dr. Craig says: "When we come to passages in which the faith of a disciple is fully established" (we pause to note that this does not necessarily mean the faith of the translator also!), "the RSV is unequivocal in using exactly the form which you demand. When the Lamb sits upon the throne, He is addressed 'thou' (Rev. 5, 9)." (*The RSV: A Reply to Dr. Clarence T. Craig*, by Prof. R. C. Foster, p. 3.) To which we must reply that this is true. In fact, "thou" is used of Christ also in the exceptional cases of Mk. 1, 11 and in the parallel passage in Lk. 3, 21 (the Father's voice at His baptism); and in Mt. 25, 37-44 (saints and sinners addressing Christ at the Judgment). On the other hand, "thou," "thy," and "thee" are used also of Babylon in Rev. 18, 10, 14, 22-23!

The RSV translators could not tear out the repeated assurances of the evangelists that the disciples declared their faith in the deity of Christ and worshiped Him. But in the manner indicated they planted their own perpetual denials, cunningly imbedded in the text, alongside such affirmations of the deity of Christ and of faith in it. Of all attacks made on Holy Scripture this must be said to be one of the most crafty.

Holy Scripture sets Jesus in a class by Himself as the "*only begotten*" of the Father, begotten from eternity. It uses this very word concerning Him, a word which is freighted with infinite meaning, and which has properly played a stupendous role in the great historic controversies of the Church, particularly in its enduring controversy

against Arianism, and in its Creed. (Cp. especially the Nicene Creed.) "The only begotten Son" indicates that He has a peculiar relation, a relationship of a common essence, which is true of no other person. This the modernist rejects. Now, what has become of this unique Scriptural term in the RSV? It has been discarded wherever it occurs in Holy Scripture! In their *Introduction to the RSV of the New Testament*, these revisionists, speaking of what must be done in a translation, as over against a commentary, have stated (p. 48): "That must set down without distinction renderings that are uncertain and those that are certain." Now, there can be no uncertainty about the rendering "only begotten." For it is certain that the original Greek text says (*monogenees*) "only begotten." And yet the RSV has substituted "only" for this distinctive and unique designation for the eternal Son of God. The translators furthermore state that their translation "cannot explain why for *monogenees* 'only begotten' is not so suitable as 'only' in John (1, 14; 3, 16, etc.; I John 4, 9) as well as in Luke (7, 12; 8, 42; 9, 38)." (*Intr. to RSV NT*, p. 48.) Anyone acquainted with modernism at all should have no difficulty whatever explaining why such testimonies from heaven are not suitable to it when referring to Christ!

In this connection it may be said that the expressions "The Son can do nothing of himself," "I can of mine own self do nothing" in John 5, 19, 30 (AV) are an exact rendering of the Greek, as simple as they can be, and wholly intelligible. These expressions are of one mold with the whole context, which makes clear that while the will of the Son is independent, it is identical with that of the Father. This can hardly be said of the RSV rendering "the Son can do nothing of his own accord," and "I can do nothing on my own authority."

Micah 5, 2, according to the AV, reads: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel: whose goings forth have been from of old, *from everlasting*." This has been made to read in the RSV: "whose origin is from old, from ancient days." Christ's eternal pre-existence has been removed from this passage. Incidentally, we also insist on referring the statement of John the Baptist in John 1, 15, 30 "He was before me" to time rather than to mere rank (especially also in view of the express use of the verb — *gegonen*) as Luther and

others have done this, even though the AV has "preferred."

Philippians 2, 6-7 is made to read in the RSV: "Who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God *a thing to be grasped*, but emptied himself." (Our emphasis.) According to the express testimony of Dr. Craig, a member of the RSV committee, the intention of its translation was to rule out equality with God as a thing which might have been *held on to*. (Cp. *The ASV: A Reply to Dr. Clarence T. Craig*, by Prof. R. C. Foster, p. 15.) In His humiliation Christ merely refrained from the full and constant use of His divine majesty according to His human nature. The AV brings out the real meaning of the passage.

Hebrews 1, 2 (AV: God "hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son") is made to read "by *a Son*" in the RSV. (Our emphasis.) Both the word "God," and the word "Son" when referring to Jesus, are used either with or without the definite article (but never with an indefinite article) in the Greek New Testament, and the indefinite article should not be supplied in such a case. This rule is followed in the case of "God" in the RSV and usually also in the case of references to His Son. But in this most important instance the RSV departed from this rule and by so doing put into the Bible an idea totally different from that which its author, the Holy Spirit, intended. It did quite as badly here as did Jehovah's Witnesses when in their Bible they translated John 1, 1: "Originally the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god." — In *Mt. 27, 54* and in *Mk. 15, 39* the RSV similarly has the Roman centurion at the cross confess nothing more of Jesus than that He was "a son of God." If it was the conviction of the committee of translators that the centurion, despite all that he had heard and seen, still spoke from the point of view of Roman paganism, it should have translated "a son of *a god*." (Cp. *Acts 14, 11f.* and *28, 6.*) However, the whole context testifies to his conversion, and pious Christian faith has always demanded a rendering such as that of the AV: "the Son of God." — *Hebr. 1, 3* (AV: "Being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person") is moreover watered down to read in the RSV: "He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature." — *Rom. 1, 4* (AV: "declared to be the Son of God with power . . . by the resurrection from the dead") has been weakened down in the RSV to: "designated Son of God in power . . ." — *Hebr. 2, 8*, which speaks of

God's having put everything in subjection under "him" (that is, to Christ, His Son, the Son of man, according to the very clear context) is changed to read in the RSV: "Now in putting everything in subjection to man, he left nothing outside his control."

In *Acts 3, 13, 26*, where the AV speaks of "God's Son Jesus" and in *Chapt. 4, 27, 30*, where it speaks of His "holy child Jesus" the RSV has invariably translated "servant" (a thought which the Greek word in itself might in some cases allow — as in the case of a "boy" i.e., a servant boy in English — but hardly the context in these cases).

Gal. 4, 4 does not say that Jesus was "born" under the Law, as the RSV has it. It says that He came to be of a woman and that He came to be under the law (or, as the AV has it: that He was "made of a woman" and that He was "made under the law"). Two separate actions are involved, the first of which is equivalent to being born, but not so the second. Jesus put Himself under the Law by a special separate act even though His doing so coincided with His incarnation.

Let us look at some other key passages on the deity of Christ in the Holy Scriptures and see what the RSV has done with them.

Romans 9, 5, which speaks of Israel's glorious past, in the Authorized or King James' Version correctly reads: "Of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen." The text of the RSV reads: "Of their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ. God who is over all be blessed forever. Amen." Only in a footnote is it stated: "*Or Christ, who is God over all, blessed for ever.*" — The words of *Jude 5*, which in the AV read "the Lord" (the reference is clearly to Christ according to the previous context), "having saved the people out of the land of Egypt" in the RSV become "he who saved a people" etc.; only in a footnote is attention called to the fact that "ancient authorities read *Jesus or the Lord or God.*" — The translation of *Hebr. 1, 8* (RSV: "But of the Son he says, 'Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever, the righteous scepter is the scepter of thy kingdom . . .'") is vitiated by a footnote which would make the Messianic prophecy here quoted read: "But of the Son he says, God is thy throne for ever and ever, the righteous scepter is the scepter of His kingdom." This would make the prophecy here quoted correspond to the RSV translation of its source in the Old Testament, *Ps. 45, 6*, which is similarly emptied of its Messianic content by the following rendering: "Your divine throne

endures for ever and ever. Your royal scepter is a scepter of equity." The salutation of the person sitting on the throne (Christ, the Son — Hebr. 1, 8) is removed, and the deity of Christ is thus taken away. The original, correctly rendered in the AV, reads: "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the scepter of thy kingdom is a right scepter," and these words are in the New Testament (Hebr. 1, 8) applied by God Himself to Christ, His Son! — Ps. 2, 11-12 in the AV reads: "Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him." (Our emphasis.) In the RSV this has been made to read: "Serve the Lord with fear, with trembling kiss his feet, lest he be angry," etc. The new version leaves out all reference to the Son and thus again removes from Him the deity ascribed to Him in this passage. It is true that the word for "Son" which the Hebrew Bible uses in this instance (*bar*) is a less usual one; but "his feet" is purely and simply a substitution for which no support can be cited, and it is by no means true that "the Hebrew of 11b and 12a is uncertain" as the RSV asserts in a footnote in attempting to justify its "correction." In its *Introduction to the RSV of the Old Testament*, (p. 58) the NCCUSA revision committee goes even further and says: "Of course no revision which retained translations definitely known to be erroneous, however familiar and cherished, could be justified. As ASV had to relinquish 'the beauty of holiness' (Ps. 29, 2; 96, 9)" — this is done also in the RSV, in I Chron. 16, 29: II Chron. 20, 21; Ps. 29, 2; 96, 9; 110, 3 — "so RSV has been constrained in honesty to give up 'kiss the son' (Ps. 2, 12) as an indefensible translation even of the traditional Hebrew text, which in this case clearly requires emendation." No justification whatsoever of this brash statement is so much as attempted. It may be added that while the RSV's substitution of "holy array" for "the beauty of holiness" does not necessarily change the essential meaning of the texts in question, we, on the basis of good scholarship, cling to the AV translation also here.

The Doctrine of Salvation

In *Galatians 3, 16* the Apostle, in showing that we are justified through faith in Christ, not by works of law, adduces the promise of God to Abraham in the Old Testament. He says: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not to seeds,

as of many; but as of one. And to thy seed, which is Christ." The RSV here in its footnotes indicates a mistaken reference for the source of this quotation from the Old Testament, referring us to Gen. 12, 7. This passage merely speaks of the promise of Canaan to Abraham's descendants. The thrice repeated promise actually referred to in Gal. 3, 16 (cp. v. 8) is found in Gen. 22, 18; 26, 4; 28, 14. In all of these passages the Hebrew word (the identical word used in Gen. 3, 15 of the woman's "seed," where the RSV has also correctly rendered it) which is translated by the Greek word for "seed" (*sperm*) in Galatians 3, 16, is rendered "descendants" (plural!) in the RSV. Thus the basis of the whole argument in Gal. 3, 16 is destroyed. In the quotation of the same promise to Abraham in Acts 3, 25 the RSV has rendered the Greek singular (*sperm*) "seed" by the similarly inadequate *posterity*, — "And in your posterity shall all the families of the earth be blessed." To say that "such alterations of language, of course, do not affect what is really important in the Semitic background of the New Testament" (*Intr. to the RSV of the NT* by Members of the Revision Committee, p. 29f.) is certainly not true. Not only the truth set forth in the original text, but the eternal fate of the whole world hinges on the one "seed" (Christ) in these passages.

The Messianic promise to David in II Sam. 7, 12ff. and in I Chron. 17, 11ff. is somewhat similarly weakened by the substitution of "son," "offspring" for "seed." That God was here speaking not merely of Solomon is shown by the following verses (also II Sam. 7, 11, since what is said there would be nothing unusual if it referred to a mere man!) and particularly by the words of David in II Sam. 7, 19f. as they read in the original Hebrew text (and according to the rendering of the AV as well as of Luther's excellent interpretation, *das ist eine Weise eines Menschen, der Gott der Herr ist*) which the RSV has eliminated by substituting a "correction." The truth revealed to David in II Sam 7, 12ff. and in II Chron. 17, 11ff. was clearly restated by the angel Gabriel to Mary in Lk. 1, 32f.

In Gen. 49, 10 the Messianic promise of "Shiloh" has disappeared in Jacob's blessing over Judah in the RSV. The translators admit in a footnote that they have here departed from the original Hebrew text and substituted for it a reading from the Syriac Version of the Old Testament. Luther long ago pointed out, among other things (St.

Louis Edit., Vol. II, 1966-1976; Vol. XX, 1902-1916), not only that the ancient Jews understood this passage of the Messiah as we Christians understand it today, but also that their own Chaldaic Bible translated it: "The sultan shall not be removed from the house of Judah, nor the chancellor among his children forever, until the Messiah comes, whose is the kingdom, and the people shall be obedient to him." In the RSV Gen. 49, 10 has been watered down to: "... until he comes to whom it belongs."

The true sense of the Messianic passage concerning the Son of Man in Ps. 8, 5 is vouched for by its quotation in Hebrews 2, 7, 9, which reads, according to the RSV: "Thou didst make him for a little while lower than the angels, thou hast crowned him with glory and honor." (Cp. Christ in Gethsemane, Lk. 22, 43.) In the RSV Ps. 8, 5 reads: "Yet thou hast made him little less than God . . ."

The rendering of the Messianic passage in Ps. 16, 10 "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (AV) is vouched for by its quotation in Acts 2, 27, 31; 13, 35 and by the commentation which Scripture itself gives us there concerning it. The RSV rendering of this passage is not true: "For thou dost not give me up to Sheol, or let thy godly one see the pit," Sheol meaning no more than the abode of the dead according to the conception of the RSV translators. God gave Jesus over to death, and He did let Him see "the pit"; He let Him suffer the torments of hell for us.

The Messianic passage in Is. 52, 15 is translated "so shall he startle many nations . . ." in the RSV. A footnote explains that the meaning of the Hebrew word translated "startle" is uncertain. That this is true to some extent may be admitted. (The AV and Luther render it "sprinkle," evidently referring it to the saving blood of Christ, the sense of which is certainly correct.) The RSV evidently follows the Septuagint rather than the original text, but does not really reproduce the sense of its translation — "so shall many nations gaze in wonder at him." Reliable scholarship (Gesenius-Roediger-Robinson) translates the passage: "So shall he cause many nations to rejoice in himself."

For the passage which meant so much in Luther's life and work, Hab. 2, 4, the RSV in a footnote offers the alternate reading: "The righteous shall live by his faithfulness." In the first instance in which this passage is quoted in the New Testament, Rom. 1, 17,

the RSV translates: "... as it is written, 'He who through faith is righteous shall live'." So also in the text of Gal. 3, 11, where the passage from the prophet is quoted a second time. In its third quotation in the New Testament, in Hebrews 10, 38 the RSV has retained an inferior reading of one or the other manuscripts and rendered it: "My righteous one shall live by faith."

Zech. 9, 9 reads, in the AV: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy king cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass." (Our emphasis.) In the RSV this is made to read: "Lo, your king comes to you: triumphant and victorious is he." (Our emphasis.) Reference to an essential attribute of Christ and to His work of salvation has been removed.

I John 2, 2 says (in the AV) that Christ "is the propitiation for our sins." This is a most important and comforting doctrine. It means that God is rendered favorable toward us through Christ as is necessary in view of His justice, because of our sins. Dr. Craig, member of the RSV committee, however, has stated, "with reference to sacrificial theories," that "all attempts to show that something in the character of God had to be satisfied before God could save man end only in blackening the character of God"! (R. C. Foster, *The RSV: A Reply to Dr. Clarence T. Craig*, p. 14.) The RSV therefore rendered this passage: "He is the expiation for our sins." The same change was made also in I John 4, 10 and in Rom. 3, 25. In the latter passage, which in the AV reads "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood" the words have moreover in the RSV been changed around to read: "Whom God put forward as an expiation by his blood, to be received by faith." Dr. Craig has stated that the wording which has been discarded (at the expense of the actual reading of the Greek) "was the sacrificial view," — a doctrine which modernism rejects. (Cp. Foster, *The RSV: A Reply*, p. 15.)

In Acts 20, 28 the admonition of St. Paul to the elders of the congregation at Ephesus has been rendered in the RSV: "Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you guardians, to feed the Church of the Lord which he obtained with his own blood" and in a footnote the following is suggested as an alternate reading for the last part of this admonition: "Or with the blood of his Own."

Jesus is not only the "pioneer" of our faith as the RSV has it, in *Hebr.* 12, 2 (also in 2, 10), but its "author" and finisher, as the AV correctly translates, furnishing its first cause and occasion.

II Cor. 6, 1 should be left to read: "We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain," as it is in the AV. The RSV has changed this to: "... not to accept..."

Rom. 3, 30 correctly reads in the AV: "... it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision *by* faith, and uncircumcision *through* faith." (Our emphasis.) Faith is the instrument, not the cause, of justification. This has been changed in the RSV which reads: "He will justify the circumcised on the ground of their faith and the uncircumcised *because of their faith*."

Rom. 9 33 is not correctly rendered according to the Greek text in the RSV, — "Behold I am laying in Zion a stone *that will make men stumble*," etc. (Our emphasis.) Incidentally, as in other cases, the reference to the Old Testament, *Is.* 8, 14, is not given in the RSV. It is men's own natural perverseness, their unbelief and disbelief, that makes Christ a rock of offense to them.

In *Rev.* 19, 8 the fine linen, bright and pure, with which the Bride of Christ, His Church, has been granted to be clothed, or *given*, is "the righteousness of saints" (AV), the glorious dress of the blood and righteousness of Christ, the garment of salvation which is the free gift of God to every believer. It is not "the righteous deeds of the saints" (RSV). We say this in view of the whole context of this passage, immediate and remote, despite the fact that we know the Greek word here used in itself can have either meaning, and also despite the fact that what the RSV says has been said also by others who understood and explained such a reading correctly.

Throughout the Old Testament the word "mercy" has been changed in the RSV to "steadfast love." In a discussion of the religious vocabulary of the Old Testament in *An Introduction to the RSV of the Old Testament* (p. 60f) the Revision Committee headed by Dean Weigle has said: "Most difficult and perhaps most important of all such words is the one rendered in the KJ by 'mercy' and in the ASV by 'loving kindness.' Recent research has shown that the basic meaning of this Hebrew term is not a general feeling or attitude like mercy." That the Committee is quite mistaken is clearly shown by a comparison of *Hosea* 6, 6 (where the

Hebrew term, *chesed*, occurs) and its direct quotation in *Mt.* 9, 13, where also the RSV has correctly translated the corresponding Greek word "mercy." The RSV committee says: "The use of 'steadfast love' carries with it an important theological result: the word 'love' now appears far more often in the Old Testament than it did in previous translations, counteracting the erroneous impression of many Christians that the God of the Old Testament was not a God of love." This is just so much gobbledegook, not worthy of a translator. But aside from that, the word "mercy" now appears correspondingly less often!

The Unitarianism of RSV Translators

In *Acts* 8, 16 the Holy Spirit is referred to as "it." "It had not yet fallen on any of them." In *Eph.* 1, 14 the neuter pronoun "which" is used of the Spirit. In the light of what the revision committee has said in its *Introduction to the RSV, NT*, p. 54, this would make it appear as though the Holy Spirit is not being thought of as a person. In other instances the Holy Spirit is referred to as a person. However, a remark of Dr. Craig, RSV committee member, is significant in this connection: "One of the difficult questions facing the committee," he said, "was whether to translate the pronouns referring to the Holy Spirit by the masculine 'he' or the neuter 'it.' For himself Dr. Craig resolved the difficulty by saying that if Paul could personify death and sin, he could also personify the Spirit of God; but the Spirit was no more a person than the wisdom of God." (Cp. R. C. Foster, *The RSV: A Reply*, p. 15.) How Christ is shorn of His deity by members of this same committee has already been shown. The committee breathes a Unitarian spirit.

In this connection it may be added that "This God" (a rendering of the Hebrew word "God" with the definite article, which does not require translation in our idiom — our emphasis) is hardly a fortunate rendering, in *II Sam.* 22, 31. 33; *Ps.* 18, 30. The RSV itself does not elsewhere render this simple idiom thus, — e.g. in *Ps.* 68, 20, where it has done considerably better by the contextual rendering "Our God"; or in *Ps.* 18, 32. 47; 68, 21, where it has simply translated "God."

The Resurrection of the Body

The great resurrection passage in *Job* 19, 25-27, on which so many of the Church's jubilant Easter hymns and anthems are based and which is incorporated in its funeral liturgies, has been deprived of its teaching

of a resurrection of the flesh, a bodily resurrection. In the AV this grand passage reads: "For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet *in my flesh* shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another, though my reins be consumed within me." (Our emphasis.) In the RSV this key passage on the resurrection in the Old Testament reads, as it did already in the ASV: "For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at last he will stand upon the earth; and after my skin has been thus destroyed, then *without my flesh* I shall see God, whom I shall see on my side, and my eyes shall behold, and not another. My heart faints within me." (Our emphasis.) In its footnotes to this passage "from" my flesh is offered as an alternate reading for "without" my flesh, and it is said of this whole verse that its meaning is "uncertain"! The RSV rendering is a violation of the Hebrew text and its context.

The Doctrine of the End of the World and of Hell

In such passages as *Mt. 13, 39-40* (the final harvest), *24, 3* (Christ's final coming, etc.), *28, 20* (the promise of Christ's constant presence in connection with His great commission to His church) the end of the world in the RSV becomes a mere "close of the age." Similarly, whoever commits the unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost need fear no more than that he "will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come," according to *Mt. 12, 32* as it reads in the RSV. If the parallel passage in *Mk. 3, 29* had been similarly translated, it would have read: "Whosoever blasphemes the Holy Spirit has no forgiveness until the ages, but is guilty of an ageless sin." No doubt realizing that such a reading would be altogether too foolish, the RSV committee broke down with its system at this point and rendered the passage "never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin." (That it has done infinitely better in the case of *Eph. 3, 21* and *Is. 45, 17* has been shown above.)

The RSV translators have found fault with the translators of the AV because "they used 'hell' indiscriminately for 'Hades' (*Mt. 11, 23*) and for 'Gehenna' (*Mt. 5, 22*)."

They say (*An Introduction to the RSV, NT, p. 20*): "One meant the abode of the dead; the other, a place of punishment. But how could the English reader know which Greek word stood in any individual passage?" In their own translation the RSV revisionists thus

differentiate between hell and Hades. But what these translators seem to overlook completely is that in the New Testament we are dealing with the Scriptural use of terms, not with their connotation in Greek generally, and least of all with some ancient pagan conception of them (just as is the case also with such words as for instance "baptism"). In *Luke 16, 23* it is said of the rich man (in the good old AV) that "in hell he lift up his eyes, *being in torments*," etc., "*in this flame*," v. 24. The Greek word for "hell" here is "hades," and it is so rendered in the RSV. But how can anyone in view of what is here expressly said contend that this word here does not mean a *place of punishment*? Certainly, here is warrant enough for the translation of the AV, which is also the consistent translation in Luther's great version of the Bible. *Mt. 16, 18* has in the RSV become: "I will build my church, and the powers of death" (Greek: *hades*) "shall not prevail against it." And the judgment spoken over the so signally blessed but unrepentant Capernaum becomes a mere: "You will be brought down to Hades," in *Mt. 11, 23* and *Lk. 10, 15*.

Another word used for "hell" in the Bible, alongside those already referred to and others, is the Hebrew word *sheol* in the Old Testament. Like the Greek word *hades* in the New Testament, this word is left untranslated in the RSV. This provides room for contentions and denials of modernists in connection with it similar to those associated with the Greek word *hades*. In *Prov. 15, 11* the RSV has left untranslated both "Sheol and Abaddon" (translated "hell and destruction" in the AV). If the meaning of the latter word were not otherwise clear to us, it could be identified from *Rev. 9, 11*, where a footnote in the RSV renders it "Destroyer."

Other Doctrines

In its *Introduction to the RSV of the New Testament* the translators say concerning *John 1, 42*: "We have both transliterated and translated, 'Cephas (which means Peter or Rock).'" We note that in the 1946 edition of the RSV New Testament *John 1, 42*, recording the words of Jesus to Peter at their first meeting, is indeed translated: "'So you are Simon the son of John? You shall be called Cephas' (which means Rock)" and the footnote is added: "Greek *Peter*." However, the 1950 edition of the RSV reads: "... (which means Peter)," and adds the footnote: "From the word for *rock* in Aramaic and Greek, respectively." Actually, the word "Peter" (a masculine form in the Greek) means as much as a *rockman*; the word for rock itself

(which is in the feminine form) is in the Holy Scriptures reserved for Christ, the Rock of Ages, on whom the Church is built. Cp. Mt. 16, 18; I Cor. 10, 4; Rom. 9, 33; Dan. chapt. 2. Peter himself put God's final seal on this great truth in I Pet. 2, 1-8. (Note: "So" is not in the original of John 1, 42, and the sentence should not be given a question form.)

In Eph. 3, 14-15 the Apostle Paul tells us that he bowed his knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, after whom the whole family on earth, all of God's children in Christ Jesus, the one holy *Christian* family or Church on earth and in heaven, has been named. In the RSV the words "of our Lord Jesus Christ" are omitted, and the passage is made to read: "I bow my knees before the Father, from whom *every* family in heaven and earth is named." (Our emphasis.) What sense is such a rendering supposed to yield?

In its translation of I Tim. 3, 2, 12; 5, 9, and in Titus 1, 6 the RSV contains an error which both Moffatt and Goodspeed had already incorporated in their own versions of Scripture. I Tim. 3, 2 reads, in the RSV: "Now a bishop must be above reproach, *married only once*." Tit. 1, 6 says, likewise, in the RSV, of elders (a word which is used interchangeably with "bishops" in the New Testament, both words meaning any ordinary pastor), that they are to be "men who are blameless, *married only once*." (Our emphasis.) I Tim. 3, 12 is similarly rendered in the RSV: "Let deacons be *married only once*." (Our emphasis.) I Tim. 5, 9 is, again similarly, rendered: "Let no one be enrolled as a widow" (the meaning is as a deaconess) "who is under sixty years of age, or *has been married more than once*." (Our emphasis.) In each of these instances the RSV adds a footnote which makes the admission: "Greek *the husband of one wife . . . the wife of one husband*" — a plain injunction against polygamy and polyandry. Now if that is what the Greek says, as is admitted, then why did not the RSV "translators" retain the reading of the AV, which says exactly what is said in the original text of Holy Scripture?

In Rom. 16, 17 divisions and offenses become mere "dissensions and difficulties" in the RSV and the whole sentence structure in this verse is so rearranged as to eliminate the real doctrine of separation contained in this classic warning against persistent errorists. Changing the sentence structure of the original text, the RSV makes Rom. 16, 17 read: "I appeal to you, brethren, to take note

of those who create dissensions and difficulties, in opposition to the doctrine which you have been taught; avoid them." Actually the text reads as the AV has rendered it: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned" (or, as Luther has it, "divisions and offenses alongside the doctrine which ye have learned"); "and avoid them." All false doctrine, everything at variance with Scripture, is included here. All false doctrine is offensive and, potentially at least, divisive. — I Cor. 11, 19 reads in the AV: "For there must be also" — this also, by comparison with the foregoing divisions has the sense of *even* — "heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you." In the RSV these "*heresies*" — the identical word as in the Greek, simply transliterated — become mere "factions." — In II Cor. 2, 6, where the possible putting away or excommunication of an incestuous member is referred to, the "many" (that is the whole congregation, according to the context), as the AV has it, who inflicted this punishment or censure, become merely "the majority" in the RSV. — The sense of I Cor. 11, 16 is completely changed. The AV rightly reads: "But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God." The RSV misreads: ". . . we recognize no *other* practice." (Our emphasis.) By this device, "*other*" necessarily referring back to the social custom of a woman's being veiled at public prayer in the Apostle's time, the force of the latter's real statement is destroyed. — In Gal. 4, 3 the RSV ("we were slaves to the elemental spirits of the universe") ascribes to the Apostle a wholly pagan conception of the spirit world, which was actually foreign to him both as a Jew and as a Christian, not to speak of the reflection of this translation on the real author of Holy Scriptures, the Holy Spirit. (Cp. also v. 9; Col. 2, 8, 20.) This verse of Scripture speaks of the yoke of the Law. Its meaning is clear from the context, especially from v. 9. In being subjected to regulations about food and drink, washings and purifications, sacrifices of all kinds, rules about places, times, bodily actions of all kinds, the Old Testament believers were placed under material, earthly things that were beggarly indeed.

"The Revelation to John" (our emphasis), as the title of the last book of the Bible has been made to read in the RSV, does not adequately state what ought to be stated in the title of the book. This book contains a

prophetical account of "the revelation of Jesus Christ" (v. 1) which God gave to Him, in other words an account of Christ's historic manifestation of His exaltation in His rulership over the Church and the world as He sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty, eventually to return in visible glory to judge the quick and the dead. The ancient title of the book, which has been supplied by the Church, is better, even though also that must be understood rightly: The Revelation (sc. of Jesus Christ as we have it by the pen) of St. John the Divine. What is more important, the master key to the Revelation has been lost in the RSV. This key is given us in the all-important word *signified* in Chapt. 1, 1: "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by His angel unto his servant John." God *sign-i-fied* the things which by their shortly coming to pass were to be evidences to believers of the exaltation of God's Christ. This is an exact rendering of the Greek original of the New Testament (a word from which such English terms as "semaphore" etc. have been derived). God imparted a knowledge of Christ's revelation beforehand to John, and through him to us, through *signs or symbols* such as abound throughout the book, not by a literal account. The Revelation in its broad outlines is not to be understood literally, but rather figuratively, its figures being, for the most part explained incidentally either in this volume itself or elsewhere in Holy Scripture. (For instance, the "Lamb" on the throne, etc., etc.) This plain direction has disappeared in the RSV translation through substitution of the words "*He made it known*" etc. for "*He signified it.*"

The Creation Account in Genesis and the Human Soul

It should not be too difficult to judge the comparative merit of the AV and of the RSV with respect to the creation account in Genesis. The majestic absolute "In the beginning" of *Gen. 1, 1* would become a mere undefined relative period of time according to an alternate reading suggested in a footnote of the RSV — "When God began to create." According to the text itself of this version the first six days of time in *Gen. 1, 1-31* correspondingly, become "*one day, . . . a second day,*" etc. (our emphasis), so that the day of rest in 2, 4 is merely "*the seventh day*" of such a series. In 1, 2 "*wind*" is offered as an alternate reading for *Spirit*, so that the verse would read: ". . . and the wind of God

was moving over the face of the waters." The AV's "and man became a living soul" in 2, 7 has been revised to ". . . a living being."

Concerning the AV's translation "soul" in the Old Testament, as in *Gen. 2, 7*, the RSV Committee has said (*Intr. to the RSV, NT, p. 6*): "The traditional rendering 'soul' for Hebrew *nephesh* (corresponding fairly closely in meaning to the Greek *psyche*) has proved particularly unfortunate, introducing *ideas and associations never entertained by the writers of the Old Testament.*" (Our emphasis.) That this is not true can be seen e.g. from a comparison of *Ps. 16, 10* (where the RSV renders the Hebrew "*my nephesh*" simply by "*me*") with its direct quotation in *Acts 2, 27 (31)*, where the Holy Spirit, who is the real author of all Scripture, has rendered his own Hebrew by the corresponding Greek words for "*my soul,*" as also the RSV has translated them here. Continuing the quotation of the RSV translators concerning the Hebrew word *nephesh*, they conclude: "*In the RSV this Hebrew word is represented by 'life,' 'person,' 'desire,' or whatever the particular context requires.*" (Our emphasis.) Why then, we justly ask, is it not also properly represented by "*soul*"?

In *Hebr. 11, 3* the RSV rendering "What is seen *was made out of things* which do not appear" (our emphasis) is not a proper rendering of the Greek text. The AV rightly translates: "The things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." Luther has rendered this passage: All that one sees has come to be out of nothing.

The Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures

Mt. 22, 43 and its parallel, *Mk. 12, 36*, should read not as the text of the RSV has it: "David, inspired by the Spirit, calls" Christ Lord . . . "declares"; but as its footnote and the AV render these passages: "David in the spirit" doth call . . . "said by the Holy Ghost." To be in the Spirit is one thing; to be inspired is another thing. Holy Scripture ascribes divine inspiration directly to *itself*, to *what's written*, to its very words, and does not leave us to arrive at this most important truth by a mere deduction, *II Tim. 3, 16*. Personal inspiration (which is not a Scriptural term like verbal inspiration) should not be confused with it, not substituted for it. — In *Luke 1, 3* one could rightfully translate the evangelist's words: "having had perfect understanding of all things *from above*" rather than ". . . from the very first," as the AV has it. (The Greek word *anōthen*, used here, can have either meaning.) The RSV

"for some time past" is not a faithful reproduction of the original text. — Under II Tim. 3, 16 a footnote in the RSV makes room for the following false reading: "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable," etc.

Misplaced Quotations

The RSV has resorted to the use of quotation marks to indicate citations (e.g. of Old Testament passages in the New Testament) or direct speech. There should hardly be any objection to this; in fact, one might commend this device, provided only that it can be and is properly employed throughout the sacred volume. However, the use of quotations in the RSV becomes *interpretive*. For instance, we believe that Acts 19, 5 should be included in the quotation begun in v. 4 as words of the Apostle Paul. This would leave the situation in this entire passage parallel with that in Acts 8, 14-16. To attribute the baptizing in v. 5 to Paul, by ending the quotation of his words with v. 4, changes the sense of the whole situation radically and complicates it e. g. by the implication, or rather the express assertion, that Paul rebaptized the twelve disciples at Ephesus who had already been baptized into the coming Christ by John, whereas he did no more than lay his hands upon them, imparting special gifts of the Spirit. However, the RSV's use of quotation marks leaves room only for its own interpretation. — The words of John 3, 16-21 should undoubtedly be attributed to our Lord Himself, which is not done in the RSV.

All of this by no means exhausts the subject under discussion. However, any more detailed criticism, and particularly matters which pertain purely to style, were regarded as lying beyond the province of the present review of the RSV. Regarding the latter it may be stated here that "Who are to go?" (Exod. 10, 8) is hardly good idiomatic English, and that the capitalization of "the Book of the Chronicles" in Esther 2, 23 (referring to the record of the Persian Empire, rendered "the book of memorable deeds, the chronicles" in 6, 1) can lead to confusion with the two Biblical books of the Chronicles in the case of the less informed.

III

PROMOTION, RECEPTION, AND SUMMARY JUDGMENT

It has already been stated in this review of the RSV that the chairman and secretary of the Division of Christian Education of the NCCCUA, which holds the copyright on this publication, were ex officio members of the

RSV committee, and that they were as such charged with the special responsibility of matters of general policy, finance, and public relations connected with it. It was their business and the business of Thomas Nelson and Sons, their publishers, to promote its circulation. Half a million dollars was reported to have been put at their disposal for this purpose. An elaborate and very skillfully conducted advertising campaign was planned and executed. This campaign has been called "the greatest, the best financed, and most highly pressured ever witnessed by the Christian Church." In its efforts to replace the Authorized Version by a new one, the old version was first of all discredited. Articles appeared, claiming that there are many errors in the Old Book. This had the effect of raising questions about the trustworthiness of the old version. This debunking process was part of the advance sale campaign for the new RSV, which was climaxed by the promotion of 3,000 rallies in celebration of "the greatest Bible news in 341 years." No Bibles were released for sale until the day of the mammoth celebration. On the word of others, buyers secured copies for themselves, rejoicing in what they had not seen and exulting in what they did not know. Now that the new version is being attacked, its promoters turn around and defend the RSV against these attacks by appealing to its great sale.

The Bible is a perennial best seller. Any new version of it will attract immediate and widespread interest. And it pays to advertise! The first printing of 1,000,000 copies of the RSV is reported to have been sold out on September 30, the day when it was first released for sale. A second printing of 600,000 was reported to have been exhausted by November 30, just two months later. At that time publishers were planning to get out a cheaper edition for Sunday Schools and also a pulpit edition in larger type. Wm. Dickerson, vice-president and sales manager of Thomas Nelson and Sons, credited intensive pre-publication promotion climaxed by church observances — those 3,000 well organized rallies, advertising and extolling the RSV — with circulation of the new text. Citing its tremendous sale, he said: "This has never happened in the history of publishing. I couldn't even mention a book to compare." The best that Mr. Dickerson could recall was *Gone With the Wind*, of which he said: "It was a peanut compared to this." (A little research in the field of Bible publication, which is supposed to be Mr. Dickerson's own

special field, would have disclosed to him that when the New Testament of the now pretty well discarded English Revised Version appeared, in 1881, 3,000,000 copies were sold within a year. Over against this, it is reported that of the new RSV New Testament, which was released in 1946, 1,000,000 copies were sold the first year and another million between that time and the time when the complete Bible of the RSV was released, in 1952.)

The RSV has no doubt already had its biggest day. Three months after its appearance a Gallup poll showed that 33% of those polled had not seen or heard of it, another 17%, of those who had seen or heard of it, had formed no opinion concerning it; of the remaining 50%, 28% favored it; 22% did not. Well-considered objection to this radically streamlined modern version of the old Sacred Book has long since begun to assert itself. We have already mentioned the serious objections to it of such devout and scholarly men as Dr. John A. Scott, Dr. Sam M. Zwemer, Dr. N. B. Stonehouse, and others. Public burnings of the book are reported to have taken place. More recently, opposition has crystallized into an earnest, determined, organized protest against this perversion of Holy Scripture. It is being spearheaded by the American Council of Christian Churches, representing churches of many denominations. This (fundamentalist) association of churches in its all-out war against the RSV announced "A Crusade for the Word of God," initiated at "A National Protest Meeting — Part of a Nation-Wide Reaction" to the RSV, at Denver, Colorado, on December 9, 1952. Dr. Carl McIntire of Collingswood, N. J., president of the International Council of Christian Churches, was one of the two principal speakers on that occasion. His topic was "Modernism's Attack on the Deity of Christ, or Shall We Accept the Revised Standard Perversion of the Bible?" Two resolutions were passed as the outcome of this meeting. The first of these resolutions is a strong rejection of this new book, according to which it is to be henceforth and forever marked for what it in reality is, "The Modernist's Bible." This resolution calls the present effort of the NCCUSA to make the RSV the accepted Bible of the People "perhaps the most reprehensible and shameless action of that organization in all its dark history." The second resolution called for 3,000 or more local rallies throughout the nation on January 30, (1953) to mark a continuing campaign, to be known as the Back-to-the-Bible-Crusade.

Also the secular press, evidently confining its criticism to literary grounds, has not been unanimously receptive of the new version. When the RSV New Testament first appeared, the Iowa City *Iowan* under the heading "Changing the Bible," printed the following comment:

"Perhaps some day the scholars will quit fooling around with the King James version of the Bible. Maybe they eventually will realize that that version not only has satisfied English speaking people for years, but also has enriched our lives, and for that reason we are reluctant to part with it.

"Everything familiar and treasured sooner or later comes in for altering, it seems, but a hands-off policy concerning the King James version would be appreciated.

"Nine scholars of the American Standard Bible version committee have streamlined the New Testament in such a manner as to deprive it of much of its vigor and rhythm. They have complicated it, instead of simplifying it. These nine wise men believe the average man can't understand the language of the Testament. The fact is the average man has understood it for centuries. Even if he had not, he would not be enlightened by such changes as 'I did not disobey' to the new 'I was not disobedient to.'

"'Iniquity,' a forceful word, is trimmed to 'wickedness.' To 'wax' is watered down to 'grow.' A 'garment' becomes 'clothes.' 'Smite' is changed to 'strike,' 'multitudes' to 'crowds of men,' 'mote in the eye' to 'speck in the eye,' 'a-hungered' to 'famished,' 'marveled' to 'amazed,' and 'just' man to 'upright' man.

"The nine scholars probably have labored in vain. Few Bible readers will turn from the vigorous King James version to the modernization. Some things, like truth and beauty and vigor, never need 'bringing up to date'."

The San Francisco *Argonaut* ends an editorial criticising the language of the new version on the following note: "Fortunately, a considerable number of clergymen still regard the King James version as being preferable to any other and will continue to use it in their pulpits. We hope that the number of them will increase, for surely among all the translations of the Bible into English none has ever equaled for poetic beauty — and so the quality of being in keeping with the spirit of the original writing — the high magnificence and rich simplicity of the King James version."

In an editorial titled "Something Has Been Lost," the Washington, D. C., *Evening Star* has said: "One is inclined to believe that, despite the great circulation planned for the Revised Bible, it will not displace the King James Version."

The Globe and Mail of Toronto, Canada, observed in an editorial: "It is not to be assumed, however, that the so-called King James or Authorized Version of the Bible will be supplanted in any foreseeable future. Its unique position among the books of the English language, the language of its diction and the ingrained influence it has had on the speech and thought of English-speaking people, place it above challenge by any book of these times. The new revision might enable people to understand more clearly, but in the crises of life, it will be to the old and well-remembered language that the soul will turn for comfort and solace."

A most excellent article, severely critical of the RSV, was written as the lead article for the March, 1953, issue of the *Ladies Home Journal* by Dorothy Thompson. Comparing "The Old Bible and the New," this outstanding journalist, who may certainly be regarded as somewhat of an authority in the field of English literature, has the highest praise for the King James Version (as well as for Luther's German version) and comes to the following conclusion: "I am compelled to say that I find the new text inferior on nearly every page to the one it seeks to supplant, and for reasons that I think I can define. It is weaker, less vivid, defective in imagery, less beautiful, and less inspired. And I, at least, do not find it easier to understand." (P. 14.) With the words "less inspired" the author no doubt actually stated more than she meant to say.

It may be readily conceded that a conservative, moderate revision of the AV may be desirable, — a revision which would restrict itself to actual improvements, especially by replacement of antiquated spelling, words, and meanings, and which would leave the eternal TRUTH which is embodied in this translation untouched. Such revisions of the AV were made before — in 1613, 1629, 1638, 1762, and in 1769. The AV is a product of an age of faith. The RSV is a product of an age of doubt, denial, and disbelief. It has done one thing. It has shown that if we are again to have a reliable revision of the AV, modernism cannot be entrusted with that task. Those who are unfamiliar with the

language of the original text are wholly at the mercy of its many mistranslations. The RSV Committee itself has said (*Intr. RSV, NT, p. 19f.*): "The revision is issued with no sense of finality. . . . No one supposes or hopes that this version will serve for centuries to come." Fortunately the AV is not copyrighted. The fact that the RSV is copyrighted — not to forget that royalties derived from its sale may be expected to further the modernistic work of the NCCUSA — may prove an added incentive for a more acceptable revision. The field is still wide open. Whosoever will, may take of the water of life freely and pass it on to others.

Let it be remembered that the AV was published in the face of more than half a dozen English versions which appeared within less than a century preceding its own publication, the first portion of one of these, the Old Testament of the Douay Version, making its appearance just a year before it.

If some courageous, enterprising church or group of churches would only assert enough leadership to undertake such a task as we have indicated, we are sure that its revision should both outsell and outlast the RSV, the Bible of Modernists.

SPECIAL OFFER

Copies of this combined March-April issue of the *Confessional Lutheran* may be had at the following prices (postpaid) in the interest of a wider distribution of the article on the Revised Standard Version: 25 cts. each; \$2.50 per dozen copies; \$20 per one hundred.

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The May issue of the *Confessional Lutheran* featured an article on the *The Revised Standard Version and Lutheran Churches in America*, and thus brought this subject up to date. Same prices as above for this single 12-page issue, as long as they last.

IV

THE RSV AND LUTHERAN
CHURCHES IN AMERICA

In discussing the attitude of various Lutheran bodies in America over against the RSV, we shall begin with the National Lutheran Council, consisting chiefly of the left-wing United Lutheran Church and the unionistically mediating American Lutheran Conference, eight different Lutheran Churches which in all comprise two-thirds of all Lutherans in America. The NLC has a joint commission which is charged with the preparation of a Liturgy and Hymnal to be used by its member churches. Present plans look toward making such a commission permanent, the various bodies of the NLC being represented as follows: The United Lutheran Church, by ten members; the American Lutheran Church, the Augustana Lutheran Church, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church, each by four; and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church (in future to be known as the American Evangelical Lutheran Church), the Lutheran Free Church, and the Suomi Synod, each by one. According to present plans, this commission is to have "ultimate responsibility for the content, editing, and format of all editions of the new Service Book and the Hymnal now in preparation." In view of the fact that three bodies of the NLC — the United Lutheran Church, the Augustana Lutheran Church, and the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church — already are members of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., it might have been expected that its commission would favor the use of the new text, the text of the RSV, in the stated lessons (the Epistle and Gospel for the day) etc. in the new service book and hymnal now in preparation. However, such was not to be the case. On the contrary, this commission submitted a unanimous report favoring the use of the King James or Authorized Version. However, its own plans are being frustrated by action of member churches of the NLC.

At the October, 1952, convention of the United Lutheran Church ten of its district

synods urged it to request the printing of the new text in the common Service Book of the NLC. Two of the members of the United Lutheran Church who represent it on the joint NLC service book and hymnal commission protested vigorously. Dr. Edw. T. Horn, III, chairman of the Common Service Book committee, warned "not to take an action you will regret five years from now." He was supported by Dr. Luther D. Reed, another member of the committee, who warned that adoption of the revised version "would be little less than a calamity." Nevertheless, after a heated debate, which took almost all of the afternoon of a crowded convention schedule despite the fact that speeches were limited to five minutes each, the request to print the RSV text won out by a vote of 343-198.

The Augustana Lutheran Church had endorsed the use of the RSV in the service book already in 1951 and reaffirmed it in 1952 after the joint commission had rejected its first request.

The American Lutheran Church at its convention, also in October, 1952, became the third group within the National Lutheran Council to instruct its representatives on the joint commission of the NLC which is preparing "The Service Book and Hymnal of the Lutheran Church" to be used by member churches of that body to vote for inclusion of the RSV text in that publication. Dr. Wm. N. Emch's "Question Box" department, moreover, in the *Lutheran Standard*, issue of Dec. 27, 1952, under the heading "How Reliable Is the New RSV Bible?" featured an all-out defense of this translation against attacks upon it which had appeared in the *Defender* magazine. His "hope that some real scholar in Hebrew and Greek" would take up where he left off was not only well taken, but it might have included German as well. For in his discussion of Isaiah 7, 14 Dr. Emch argues as follows: "In Mt. 1, 23 (the fulfillment of that Isaiah prediction) all the English versions happily use the word 'virgin.' However, Luther sticks to *Jungfrau* — young woman or maiden" (!) Evidently Dr. Emch has not taken the trouble to read what Luther has written about this subject, especially in his treatise "Von dem Wort *Alma*, und der Jungfrauschaft Mariae," to

which we have already referred. (St. Louis Edition, Vol. XX, 2091-2109; cp. also 1801-1806.) It seems that all that remains now is for someone to rise up and insist that the English word "virgin" does not mean a virgin. Anyone, moreover, who will but take the trouble to compare denials of the deity of Christ by those responsible for the RSV and who will also carefully compare their translation and what they themselves have to say about it will hardly commit the serious blunder of charging "what may be a gross sin against the Eighth Commandment" against those who are rightly accusing the RSV committee of trying to weaken our faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God. (Cp. also Editor E. W. Schramm in *Lutheran Standard*, Jan. 10, 1953, p. 9.)

As for the Evangelical Lutheran Church, the *Book News Letter* of its Augsburg Publishing House for October, 1952, contained a review of the RSV by Dr. J. R. Lavik, since 1939 president of Luther Seminary, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Can. In this review Dr. Lavik states that he has had time only for a limited examination of this version, and that on this basis only tentative conclusions can be drawn, but "they are admittedly rather more favorable than he had anticipated." His present view is that "liberalistic conceptions have not been imposed upon this version of the Bible." At the points at which he has examined it, he says, this version seems to him to be "just as faithful to the original text as are the King James and the American Standard versions, and in some places more so."

The last three bodies which have been mentioned are the largest bodies within the American Lutheran Conference.

Coming now to the Synodical Conference, we are happy to say that both the Wisconsin Synod and the Norwegian Synod have in their official organs published articles disapproving the work of the RSV translators. In an article in the *Northwestern Lutheran* of Dec. 28, 1952, Prof. E. Reim not only rejects the change that was made by the RSV translators in the "precious prophecy" of Isaiah 7, 14 ("virgin" changed to "young woman"), but he also rightly explains this change pointing out two patent reasons for it. First, he says, "there is the unwillingness of many, perhaps most of these modern scholars to accept the doctrine of the Virgin Birth." In the second place, "they are reflect-

ing the fact that they are actually operating with a denial of the verbal inspiration of the Bible." This article is followed by the announcement that in order to provide further information about this new translation, Pres. Brenner has appointed a committee, which will report from time to time. (P. 410.)

Now, what of the Missouri Synod?

When the New Testament of the RSV first appeared, in 1946, a review of it by Dr. L. Fuerbringer was published in the *Lutheraner*. (April 2, 1946.) While Dr. Fuerbringer stated that his review was based on an incomplete examination of the new version, he did call attention to certain doctrinal errors based on an incorrect rendering of the original text. A feature article by Dean Rich. A. Jesse in the *Lutheran Witness* (April 23, 1946) was perhaps somewhat less critical. The *Concordia Theological Monthly* in May, 1946, featured a quite laudatory article by Dr. Arndt on the new version. The *Concordia Theological Monthly* of December, 1946, under the heading "A Negative Verdict on the RSV of the New Testament" reprinted from the *Presbyterian* of July 4 of that year an article captioned "The Revised Standard Version Once More" by the well known missionary to the Mohammedans, Dr. Sam. Zwemer. This is a fine article, which closes with the words: "I still believe that the RSV bears the unmistakable marks of Liberalism." However, the editorial note which introduced the article in the CTM (like its heading) expressed no judgment concerning it, either favorable or unfavorable, but simply offered it "believing that its readers were eager to obtain as much information as possible on the excellencies and the defects of the RSV of the NT." (P. 926.) In its August, 1947, issue the CTM reprinted a portion of another fine article, already referred to in an earlier portion of this present review, by the well known classical scholar Dr. John A. Scott, which had appeared in the *Classical Weekly* of Jan. 6, 1947. In this article Dr. Scott by numerous examples shows that "the King James Version is immeasurably superior in the knowledge of Greek, in the mastery of English, and, above all, in the honest and docile fidelity to the Greek text." And he adds: "The thing in this Version which distresses me most is the irreverent disregard for the simple meaning of the original." The only judgment that the CTM rendered concerning the portion of this article which it

reprinted was: "The editorial committee does not share all the views." (P. 617.)

Since the appearance of the complete Bible of the Revised Standard Version, Pres. Behnken directed a letter to the clergy of the Missouri Synod (Nov. 20, 1952) in which he refrained from expressing any judgment of his own with regard to either the merits or the demerits of this version, advised caution, and pleaded with pastors patiently to await a seminary faculty opinion, the benefit of which he desired our people to have. The letter reads as follows:

"Some inquiries have reached me about the stand we should take with reference to the so-called 'New Bible,' the Revised Standard Version. I have requested our Seminary Faculty to examine it very thoroughly and to let our people have the benefit of this careful examination. Men of the Old Testament Department and of the New Testament Department are at work. Let us all be patient and await this report. I would plead with you, however, that in the meanwhile you exercise true care not to create the impression in the minds of our people that this revised Bible is fully correct. It certainly cannot be called what the NCC calls it, the 'official Bible.' We have been informed that it is very excellent in many parts; however, also that it has some parts which are modernistic. Hence we should be cautious in its use. Let us use it in our private study of the Word and compare it with the Authorized Version and with Luther's translation, but let us not make use of it in our pulpit. It will confuse our people if one pastor uses it and another does not. I would urge that we wait patiently for the Faculty's report."

Now, aside from the fact that pastors have an immediate responsibility toward their congregations as over against the RSV, and that they were graduated from the seminary, ordained and installed, as men who are supposed to be competent to meet such a responsibility, it may be pointed out that one of the members of the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., Dr. Geo. V. Schick, served on the 50-member Advisory Committee to the translators of the RSV, representing 'cooperating denominations.' The work of that committee went on interruptedly since 1937. Since the appearance of the RSV New Testament in 1946, moreover, six more years had passed in 1952, during which anyone could examine and form an opinion concerning at least that portion of this latest revision of the Bible. And an opinion of the St. Louis

faculty concerning it has long since been widely publicized in the *General Catalog* of Concordia Publishing House. In the 1953 edition of this catalog this opinion is reported on p. 36, in part, as follows: "The rendering is not endorsed in every passage, and differences in opinion will prevail in many instances; but *generally speaking, the version appears doctrinally sound.*" (!) The emphasis is ours.

Meanwhile such official synodical organs as the *Concordia Theological Monthly* and the *Lutheran Witness* are being lent toward spreading the liberal views of individual members of the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, concerning the RSV among our people. By means of these publications faculty members are reaching into the homes of our pastors and people, where they can incline them to accord the RSV a more or less favorable reception. The *Lutheran Witness* of Dec. 9, 1952, featured three articles on "Some Reactions to the New Bible Translation." The first of these articles, on "The Middleman in Language," was written by Prof. Martin H. Franzmann, Professor of Biblical Interpretation. It is of a more general nature. It resorts to an unbelievable example to ridicule "what some people deem an objective rendering" of Holy Scripture. The effect of the whole article is to soften readers for the blow of any eventual endorsement of the RSV. It ended with the statement: "Most of our difficulties, the real difficulties, arise not from the surface badness or goodness of a translation, but from the interior badness of our hearts." The second of these articles, "RSV of the New Testament," was written by Dr. Wm. F. Arndt, Professor of New Testament Interpretation. It finds a great deal of fault with the King James or Authorized Version, strikes a passing blow at Luther's version, assures us that we shall never have a perfect translation here on earth (we do ask for a thoroughly *reliable* one), adduces exactly four relatively less considerable examples of error, mistranslation, defect, and inconsistency in the RSV, and concludes with this sage bit of advice: "In general I would say that it is still too early to pronounce a final judgment on the RSV. Let the version be studied. It was not prepared in a day, and it should not be disposed of in a day." (What if we were to apply such a principle to a thousand and one other evils which, like the RSV, have arisen to plague us in this poor world!) The third article, "Revised Standard Version

of the Old Testament," was written by Dr. George V. Schick, Professor of Old Testament Interpretation. This article ends with the following commendation of the RSV: "From various sides the RSV has met with severe criticism, but it seems to the present writer that in spite of everything that may be said against it the new version, in many respects, is rendering the English reader a service by bringing him God's Word in a form which can easily be understood." In a similar article in the *Concordia Theological Monthly*, Jan., 1953, p. 8, Dr. Schick says concerning the Hebrew word in Isaiah 7, 14 which is correctly translated "virgin" in the Authorized Version, that the RSV committee was eager to be very "scientific," that "the Hebrew noun 'almah' has the meaning 'young woman,'" and that "the word does not stress the idea of virginity." Any and all further argument with regard to what God did really say in this celebrated passage (and in the record of its fulfillment in Mt. 1, 23) is summarily waived aside in this article by Dr. Schick by means of a fallacy of opposition. The same thing is done by Dr. Schick in his *Lutheran Witness* article. In the *CTM* the fallacy appears in this form: "So far as the doctrine of the Virgin Birth is concerned, the translation 'young woman' in the Isaiah passage in no wise puts it into jeopardy, for this doctrine is based on the inspired revelation of the Evangelists." We pause to ask, Isn't the doctrine of the Virgin Birth based on the inspired revelation concerning the great sign of the Virgin's Son in the Isaiah passage, too? Didn't God reveal this doctrine already to His people in the Old Testament? Wasn't what is recorded by St. Matthew merely the fulfillment of what God had already predicted by the prophet? And does not God Himself tell us in Mt. 1, 22f that "what was spoken of the Lord by the prophet" was "Behold, a virgin shall be with child," etc.? Dr. Schick goes on to say: "Even though Mt. 1, 23 quotes the Septuagint version, this by no means elevates this version or any part of it to the status of inspired Scripture." We pause again, this time to ask, But what of the original Hebrew passage in Isaiah which the Holy Scriptures tell us is rendered by the Greek word for "virgin" in Mt. 1, 23? (It isn't true either that Mt. 1, 23 quotes the Septuagint version.) And what of Mt. 1, 23 itself, as correctly translated in the Authorized Version? In his *Lutheran Witness* article Dr. Schick insists: "Our faith in the Virgin Birth does not

depend on any uninspired translation, but on the inspired Word found in Mt. 1, 25." Aside from the fact that no translation of Mt. 1, 25 is in itself inspired either (to point up once more Dr. Schick's fallacy of opposition), do Dr. Schick and the *Lutheran Witness* actually not realize that Mt. 1, 25 says no more concerning Mary than that Joseph "knew her not until she had brought forth her firstborn son"? In the RSV, by the way, this passage reads simply: "... until she had borne a son . . ." There is not so much as a footnote indicating the existence of the better reading (and translation), "her firstborn son," found in the AV. Do Dr. Schick and the *Lutheran Witness* not realize that our faith in the doctrine of the Virgin Birth MUST rest, as it does, all that Dr. Schick and the *Lutheran Witness* insist on to the contrary notwithstanding, on the plain statements of God Himself in His Word, as we have it in Is. 7, 14 and in Mt. 1, 23, that Mary WAS a Virgin? It is here that the Lutheran Church has once for all rested its faith. (Cp. Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration, VIII, Trigl., 1023, 24.) And there is the divine foundation on which we shall continue to build our faith in the Virgin Birth though others disavow it in the name of modern "scientific" scholarship, so help us God!

In the *CTM*, palliation of "some other instances" of mistranslation in the RSV is attempted by Dr. Schick, notably in the case of Ps. 2, 12. (P. 9.) And concerning the charge of denial of the deity of Christ by use of the differentiating form of address, "you" in the case of Christ as over against the acknowledged reservation of "thou" for God (a charge which is well substantiated by its admission by Dr. Craig himself, a member of the translating committee, as has already been shown) Dr. Schick offers the unacceptable "charitable explanation" of merely "assuming an inconsistency in the use of 'thou' and 'you' when referring to Christ." (P. 2.) His *CTM* article ends on a note similar to that in the *Lutheran Witness* article.

Such views as we have been discussing have been advocated by such spokesmen as we have mentioned also before pastoral conferences, from where they have spread further. Unofficial publications such as the *St. Louis Lutheran* and the (Milwaukee, Wis.) *Badger Lutheran* are disseminating them. "RSV Judged 'Proper' by Faculty Men" was the heading of an article in the Nov. 22, 1952, issue of the former, and "RSV

'Obvious Necessity' Report Seminary Professors" was the heading of an article in the Dec. 4, 1952, issue of the latter publication. Under that heading the *Badger Lutheran* reported the following information as coming out of St. Louis: "A new translation of the Bible was obviously necessary," two professors of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, told the pastoral conference of St. Louis last week, as they gave a review of the recently published Revised Standard Version of the Bible. More than 70 Lutheran ministers from the St. Louis area attended the meeting." Prof. Geo. Schick and Dr. Wm. Arndt are named as the two professors referred to. In its issue of Dec. 18, 1952, the same publication, under the heading "Local Pastor Defends RSV," reported the Rev. John H. Baumgaertner, pastor of Capitol Drive Lutheran Church in Milwaukee (Missouri Synod), as assuring his congregation that the RSV Bible "is worthy of dissemination because it is an accurate translation of the original text," — a conviction with which he said he came away from a visit with Dr. John R. Trever (Methodist), Director of English Bible of the Division of Christian Education of the NCCCUSA (who also made a detailed study of the terms used in the Bible as names of trees for the RSV Committee). Subsequently a panel discussion was held at Capitol Drive Lutheran Church before an audience of 700 people with Dr. Trever as main speaker. Other members of the panel were the recently deceased Dr. Leroy Rincker, president of Concordia College, Milwaukee; Prof. J. H. Gienapp, professor at Concordia; the Rev. Paul Schuessler, assistant pastor of Layton Park Lutheran Church; and the Rev. John H. Baumgaertner, who served as moderator. Besides other things which are not true, Dr. Trever told his audience concerning Isaiah 7, 14 that this passage "has nothing to do with the doctrine of the virgin birth of Jesus." There is nothing in the report before us, from the Milwaukee, Wisconsin, *Sentinel* of January 24, 1953, to indicate that Dr. Trever's contradiction of the plain Word of God (Mt. 1, 22f) was in any way disapproved or contradicted by members of the panel or others present. And the Milwaukee *Sentinel* states that, because of the significance of the RSV change from "virgin" to "young woman," it has given us a word-for-word reproduction of this particular part of the panel discussion "as recorded" (which we assume to refer to a tape-recording) "by the Milwaukee Lutheran, official publication of the Lutheran

Men in America in Wisconsin." — It may be stated that since these lines were first written, other articles concerning the RSV have appeared in some of the publications named. In its issue of February 14, 1953, e.g., the *St. Louis Lutheran* reported that Dr. Arndt, speaking before Lutheran Luncheon Club men in St. Louis, "declared that the disputed 'virgin' passage which is causing some Christians much concern in the Revised Standard Version of the Holy Bible is rightly interpreted as 'young woman.'" Also, that "the speaker recommended the Revised Standard Version for personal and family devotional use." In a letter to the *St. Louis Lutheran* (issue of Feb. 28, 1953) Dr. Arndt repeated his assertion that "the respective Hebrew word is of general nature and can be used in speaking of any woman of marriageable age." On the other hand, Dr. J. T. Mueller has in the *Lutheraner* written very commendable articles, denouncing errors in the RSV.

One must say that such Lutherans in lending their support toward acceptance and dissemination of the RSV, the Bible of the modernistic NCCCUSA (which Dr. F. Pieper used to refer to as the Protestant Antichrist), are rather liberal about it all. Liberals, also Lutheran liberals, have an easy tolerance for those who question the teachings of God's Word, and little tolerance for those who are firmly devoted to them. How easily, moreover, wherever such is the case, the language of modernism slips into the teaching of such people themselves is shown e.g. by an example in the 1952 (Concordia Publishing House) Children's Service, *Immanuel*, p. 9, in which children are taught to say: "Mary said: 'How can I become the mother of a son? I am not married.'" (Our emphasis.)

In view of such a situation it is well that Dr. J. H. C. Fritz struck another note in the *Lutheraner*. In the Dec. 2, 1952, issue of this official German organ of the Missouri Synod, Dr. Fritz, too, asked for more time before rendering a final verdict on the RSV. However, he warned not too hastily to lay aside the good old tried and true King James or Authorized Version, and above all to retain its use in congregational services. In the Dec. 16, 1952, issue of the same publication Dr. Fritz offered another article, on the all-important and most timely subject of "The Right of a Congregation and the RSV of the Bible." In this article Dr. Fritz once more cautioned against undue haste, questioned the superiority of the RSV, and

pointed out numerous practical difficulties associated with the introduction of any new version of the Holy Scriptures in a congregation. But above all he emphasized the right of a congregation in this respect as over against any possible dictation by a synod. The most important thing about congregational rights which needs to be emphasized in this connection, however, still remains to be said. It is this: *No congregation, and no individual, any more than any synodical official or group of officials, or a whole synod, has any right whatever to endorse or condone the perversion and pollution of God's Word at its very fountain source as it exists in the RSV, the modernistic 'Bible' of the NCCUSA.* On the contrary, every one of us, and in particular every pastor, every teacher, every professor and official has the solemn duty to warn insistently against such a situation. And there dare be no compromise.

In 1924 the liberal *Christian Century* published an editorial on "Fundamentalism and Modernism: Two Religions," in which it said: "Christianity according to Fundamentalism is one religion. Christianity according to Modernism is another religion. Which is the true religion is the question that is to be settled in all probability by our generation for future generations . . . There is a clash here as profound and as grim as between Christianity and Confucianism. Amiable words cannot hide the differences. 'Blest be the tie' may be sung till doomsday but it cannot bind these worlds together. The God of the fundamentalist is one God; the God of the modernist is another. The Christ of the fundamentalist is one Christ; the Christ of modernism is another. The Bible of fundamentalism is one Bible; the Bible of modernism is another. The church, the kingdom, the salvation, the consummation of all things — these are one thing to fundamentalists and another thing to modernists. Which God is the Christian God, which Christ is the Christian Christ, which Bible is the Christian Bible, which church, which kingdom, which salvation, which consummation, are the Christian church, the Christian kingdom, the Christian salvation, the Christian consummation? The future will tell."

We are not fundamentalists. We accept and believe *all* that God's prophets have spoken and tolerate no teaching contrary to that. And we know what is Christian and what is not Christian. But we certainly agree when it is said that modernism has its own

Bible. That is literally true today. For the RSV is as much the modernists' Bible as the Douay Version (Vulgate) is the Bible of Rome. And there can be no compromise with it here. Remember the words of a modernist which we have already cited in this review: "We win by compromise." Who ever says "A" must also say "B" and so on down to "X-Y-Z," which stands for confessional zero.

Lutherans, also Missourians, are compromising, and as over against them, modernism is winning out.

A Letter to the LUTHERAN WITNESS

(The following letter was addressed to the *Lutheran Witness*, and copies of it were sent to Dr. Geo. V. Schick, Dr. Paul M. Bretscher, Acting President, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., and President J. W. Behnken, under the same date as the letter, — Jan. 19, 1953. An unsigned form postcard, postmarked Jan. 24, was received from the *Lutheran Witness* office, acknowledging receipt of our letter. But no reply to our letter was received up to the time of this writing. The *Lutheran Witness* got its fingers into the wringer of modernism and we see no sign of its getting them out. — P. H. B.)

The *Lutheran Witness*
801 De Mun Avenue
St. Louis 5, Missouri

January 19, 1953

Dear Brethren,

An article in the *Lutheran Witness* of December 9, 1952, by Dr. George V. Schick states that our faith in the Virgin Birth depends "on the inspired Word found in Mt. 1, 25." By such a statement Dr. Schick and the *Lutheran Witness* are deceiving themselves and (potentially at least) hundreds of thousands of others also. For Mt. 1, 25 records no more concerning Mary than that Joseph "knew her not until she had brought forth her firstborn son." (The RSV simply reads: ". . . until she had borne a son.")

Our faith in the Virgin Birth is based on such express assurances of the Lord as we have in Mt. 1, 22f, where it is said that it "was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child," etc. What the Lord here expressly affirms — the foretelling of the Virgin Birth by the prophet (Isaiah) — has been denied by Dr. Schick in a similar article in the *Concordia Theological Monthly* for January, 1953, where he says (p. 8) that the word spoken of the Lord by the prophet "does not stress the

idea of virginity." Such is also the tenor of his article in the *Lutheran Witness*, — the issue being whether we should read "virgin" or merely "young woman" in Isaiah 7, 14.

With Luther (St. Louis Edition, XX, 1802) we say: "If they allege that the Hebrew does not read 'A virgin shall be with child,' . . . the answer is easy among Christians from St. Matthew and St. Luke, both of whom refer the Isaiah passage to Mary and translate the (Hebrew) word *almah* 'virgin,' and they are rather to be trusted than the whole world. And if an angel from heaven were to say that it does not mean a virgin, we still would not believe this. For God the Holy Spirit speaks through Saint Matthew and Luke, of whom we certainly hold that He understands the Hebrew language and vocabulary." And again (1807): "Of such a one as does not believe one clear passage of the divine Majesty it is to be suspected that he believes no other less clear passage either."

Will Dr. Schick and the *Lutheran Witness* bow to the authority of God's clear Word in Mt. 1, 22f (and in Isaiah 7, 14)?

Believe me

Very truly,

(Signed) Paul H. Burgdorf

Copies to: Dr. Geo. Schick

Dr. Paul M. Bretscher, Acting

President, Concordia Seminary

St. Louis, Mo.

Pres. J. W. Behnken

❶ What Is the Position of the American Lutheran Church in the Doctrine of Creation?

Note: The present article was submitted to the editor of the *Lutheran Witness*, with the request that if it should not be regarded as acceptable for publication it should be returned with a statement of the reason why. It was returned to its author without any reason whatsoever being given as to why it should not be deemed acceptable. The *Lutheran Witness* is not raising its voice against public error within the American Lutheran Church and against public rejection of what the Missouri Synod confesses and teaches. On the contrary, it is lending its support to the covering up of divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which we have learned, which are being persistently nurtured by the official position of the American Lutheran Church. P. H. B.

In the *Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod* we find the following confession (to which we subscribe with all our heart): "We teach that God has created heaven and earth, and that in the manner and in the space of time recorded in the Holy Scriptures, especially Gen. 1 and 2, namely by His almighty creative Word, and in six days. We reject every doctrine which denies or limits the work of creation as taught in Scripture. In our days it is denied or limited by those who assert, ostensibly in deference to science, that the world came into existence through a process of evolution; that is, that is has, in immense periods of time, developed more or less out of itself." (Sect. 5.)

Now, what is the position of the American Lutheran Church with regard to the Creation Days as taught in Holy Scripture? This question has again been answered in a recent issue (Oct. 25, 1952, p. 4) of the *Lutheran Standard*, official organ of the American Lutheran Church. Here we read the following question and answer, both of which we are giving in their entirety, —

"What is the teaching of the American Lutheran Church in regard to the days of creation? Does it hold these days to be 24-hour days or periods of time? — E. K., Avery, Ohio.

"The American Lutheran Church has no official teaching on this question. Among our pastors and theologians both views are held — that the days of creation were 24-hour days, and that they were periods of time. The Bible uses the word 'day' in a number of different senses."

How far this "official position" of the ALC permits members of that church to go in their teaching regarding the subject at hand is shown by another ALC publication, called *Titles*, periodically "published by the Wartburg Press in the interest of wider circulation of all types of Christian literature." In the July, 1952, issue of that publication there appeared the following review of Dr. J. M. Weidenschilling's *The Book of Genesis*, published by Concordia Publishing House, which we are again giving in its entirety, —

"*The Book of Genesis*. By J. M. Weidenschilling, Concordia. Teacher's Guide. Pupil's Guide. This goes to bat immediately against evolution and commits whatever *harikiri* (sic) would be in baseball. Rest of the volume is a bit pedantic."

By their reviews ye shall know them! The "official position" of the American Lutheran Church makes it possible for members of that church body to teach contrary to the Scriptural doctrine of Creation confessed in the *Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod*. It makes it possible for members of that church body to teach that the world came into existence through a process of evolution; that is, that it has, in immense periods of time developed "more or less out of itself." It makes it possible publicly to condemn the Missouri Synod's rejection of evolutionary doctrine and to heap the most far-reaching ridicule (theological suicide) on such a rejection.

Now, how has this difference between Missouri and the ALC been dealt with in the *Common Confession* of 1950? The *Common Confession* merely states with regard to this matter: "We believe and teach: God in the beginning created man in His own image to live according to His law which God had written into man's heart." Art. II. Every honest person will have to admit that in the *Common Confession* the express confession of the divine creation of heaven and earth in six days as recorded in Holy Scripture, and the rejection of evolutionism, as these are contained in the *Brief Statement*, are lacking. They are gone. The *Common Confession* does not confess precisely what needs particularly to be confessed in view of the circumstances confronting us today. It is woefully deficient, inadequate as a confession, failing to meet the very conditions which such a confession must be expected to meet if it is to serve its purpose at all. It is not true that "the *Common Confession* shows that agreement has been achieved in the doctrines treated." (*Proceedings*, Missouri Synod, 1950, p. 585.)

Unfortunately we cannot join in the untruthful resolution of a majority of the Milwaukee Convention of the Missouri Synod in 1950 just cited and in its ill-considered rejoicing and thanks to God for such an untruthful situation. Over against this situation our unalterable position rather is as follows: "God's Name is hallowed when the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we, as the children of God, also lead a holy life according to it. This grant us, dear Father in heaven! But he that teaches and lives otherwise than God's Word teaches, profanes the Name of God among us. From this preserve us, Heavenly Father!

In short, we reject both the false teachings which are current in, and protected by the "official position" of, the American Lutheran Church today, and the so-called *Common Confession* (of the American Lutheran Church and a convention majority of Missourians), which affords a beautiful cover under which they can carry on. We reject the latter document as a "confession" which does not confess precisely what should and must be confessed if there is to be true unity among us.

The Innermost Essence of all True Union

"When the difference is clearly understood and when controversy goes to every necessary length, we may conclude that there is a true love of union. The more careless we are in stating the differences and the more anxious to hide the sores, the farther removed we are from that unity of the Spirit which is the innermost essence of all true union."

Rudelbach, *Reformation, Lutheranism, and Union*.

• The Respective Teachings of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, the United Lutheran Church, and the American Lutheran Church, with Regard to the Doctrine of Holy Scripture

A Brief Summary of the Situation

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod has in the *Brief Statement* of its doctrinal position so defined the Scriptural doctrine of Verbal Inspiration that the Holy Scriptures are confessed to be "in all their parts and words the infallible truth, also in those parts which treat of historical, geographical, and other secular matters, John 10, 35."

The United Lutheran Church specifically rejects such a confession.

The American Lutheran Church with studied indifference continues to confess neither the one nor the other of these two positions specifically, but offers and subscribes only to confessions enabling it unionistically to go along with either one or both of the before-mentioned groups.

If there should be among our readers anyone who is not really interested in the facts concerning such all-important things, or who does not want to bother to look at the proof for them, or who indifferently insists on following the "official line" of his church

or its leaders whatever it may be, and regardless of its outcome, he need read no further. For such a one would not really be interested in the remaining portion of this article and in another article still to be published. However, anyone who still has real Lutheran blood in his spiritual veins will want to look at the incontestable proof we here offer for the seriousness of the situation which is today confronting us.

The Position of the Missouri Synod on the All-Important Doctrine of the Inspiration and Infallibility of the Holy Scriptures

In the official *Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod* the following confession is made concerning the inspiration and infallibility of the Holy Scriptures: "Since the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God, it goes without saying that they contain no errors or contradictions, but that they are in all their parts and words the infallible truth, also in those parts which treat of historical, geographical, and other secular matters, John 10, 35. . . . We reject the doctrine which under the name of science has gained wide popularity in the Church of our day that Holy Scripture is not in all its parts the Word of God, but in part the Word of God and in part the word of man and hence does, or at least might, contain error. We reject this doctrine as horrible and blasphemous, since it flatly contradicts Christ and His holy apostles, sets up men as judges over the Word of God, and thus overthrows the foundation of the Christian Church and its faith." (Par. 1. 3.)

The Position of the United Lutheran Church

In 1938 the Missouri Synod adopted a report of its convention committee (No. 16) stating that our Committee on Lutheran Union had held meetings with representatives of the United Lutheran Church in which the latter "were not able to come to an agreement with our committee on the fundamental doctrine of inspiration." (*Proceedings*, p. 233.) The *Minutes* of the 1938 convention of the ULC at Baltimore similarly state: "A point of serious difference concerned the definition of inspiration as given in the *Brief Statement* of the Missouri Synod . . . Our commission was unable to accept the statement of the Missouri Synod that the Scriptures are the infallible truth 'also in those parts which treat of historical, geographical, and other secular matters'." (*Minutes*, p. 468.)

At our next convention, in 1941, our Committee on Lutheran Church Union reported that "on account of the unwillingness of the United Lutheran Church of America commissioners to accept the paragraph in the *Brief Statement* dealing with the doctrine of inspiration it seemed useless for us to invite them to meet us, and the United Lutheran Church of America Commission likewise did not send us a request for a conference." (*Proceedings*, p. 286.) No official negotiations have been carried on between the Missouri Synod and the ULC since the time referred to, which was during the triennium of 1935-1938.

The position of the ULC over against that of the Missouri Synod on the doctrine of the inspiration and infallibility of Holy Scripture was given wide publicity in a statement in the official publication of the ULC called the *Lutheran* (Jan. 25, 1950), by its editor, Dr. G. Elson Ruff, at the time of the death of Dr. Walter A. Maier, noted Lutheran Hour speaker. While admitting that it is probable that more people had listened to Dr. Maier than to any other preacher who ever lived, Dr. Ruff went on to say that the trouble is that the well-educated won't listen to a man like Dr. Maier. His reason for saying this was given in the following words: "He upheld the teaching of the Missouri Synod, of which he was a member, that the Scriptures 'contain no errors or contradictions, but that they are in all their parts and words the infallible truth, also in those parts which treat of historical, geographical, and other secular matters'." This Scriptural position of the Missouri Synod was blasphemously denounced by the ULC *Lutheran* as "hopelessly bad sense." It will of course be noted that the position thus rejected is the position of the Missouri Synod as it is confessed in its official *Brief Statement* of its doctrinal position.

What Is the Position of the American Lutheran Church?

In answering the above question we should bear in mind a resolution of the Missouri Synod which was adopted in 1929 concerning negotiations with churches (the Iowa, Ohio, and Buffalo Synods) which in 1930 merged to form the American Lutheran Church and, at the same time, also joined with still other Lutheran bodies to organize the wider fellowship of the American Lutheran Conference. The resolution to which we refer reads as follows: "It was emphasized that future discussions be contingent on the

following two conditions: . . . b) *That future deliberations proceed from the exact point of controversy and take into account the pertinent history.*" (Proceedings, p. 113.)

As for its historical background, the American Lutheran Church tolerates modernism, inclusive of denial of the inspiration of Holy Scripture in all of its words, both within its own midst and within its wider fellowship relations in the American Lutheran Conference and in the National Lutheran Council (the latter body consists of the American Lutheran Conference plus the ULC and several smaller independent Lutheran bodies), of both of which the American Lutheran Church is a member; it is also a member of the World Council of Churches since the organization of that body in 1948.

Pertinent to its history is, for instance, the fact that in 1940 the Board of Publication of the American Lutheran Church sent to all pastors of the Missouri Synod, and to most other Lutheran pastors, in the United States and Canada a pamphlet titled *In the Interest of Lutheran Unity*. This pamphlet contains an essay on Holy Scripture by Dr. M. Reu. Here, in a discussion of the meaning of the words "all Scripture" in the passage II Tim. 3, 16 ("All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness"), the statement is made that this can hardly mean every Scripture passage, "because not every Scripture passage, although written down under the influence of the Holy Spirit, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, etc., for instance the passage Gen. 12, 6: 'And the Canaanite was then in the land.'" (P. 62. This essay was reprinted in 1952 by Augsburg Publishing House in *Two Treatises on the Means of Grace*.) The passage referred to occurs in connection with God's promise to Abraham that He would give the land of Canaan, in which the patriarch then dwelt as a lonely stranger, to his seed as a heritage. It emphasizes the fact that God would keep His promise despite the fact that Canaan was then possessed by a very powerful and numerous people who would have to be driven out of the land in order to make the fulfillment of God's Word possible, a thing which did not appear humanly likely at the time. Thus this passage is profitable for the doctrine that God always keeps His word, that He is almighty and all-wise, as well as for a number of other doctrines. And the

passage is, of course, as inspired as any other part of Holy Scripture, despite the assertion to the contrary by Dr. Reu as a representative of the American Lutheran Church. (One will also note here that Dr. Reu's peculiar expression concerning Holy Scripture, and concerning this passage in particular, that it was written down "under the influence" of the Holy Spirit does not mean Verbal Inspiration in the Scriptural sense of the word.)

At the convention of the Missouri Synod in 1941 its Committee on Lutheran Church Union reported the following: "In February, 1939, the news was published in the daily press that the Fellowship Commissions of the American Lutheran Church and the United Lutheran Church of America, after having previously adopted a mutually satisfactory statement on the *lodge question* and on *unionism*, had now succeeded in drafting a declaration acceptable to both sides with respect to the one remaining point in dispute, the doctrine of *inspiration*. The paragraphs adopted are now known as the *Pittsburgh Agreement*. The news disturbed us because we thought we were in full harmony with the American Lutheran Church on the doctrine of inspiration, while the United Lutheran Church of America commission had definitely refused to endorse what our *Brief Statement* says on this subject. The question was, How could the American Lutheran Church accept our position and at the same time find itself in harmony with the United Lutheran Church of America commissioners? In response to an invitation two members of the American Lutheran Church commission came to St. Louis for a conference. They declared: In their view the United Lutheran Church of America commission had receded from its opposition to verbal inspiration as taught in the *Brief Statement* and had accepted the Biblical doctrine. We on our part found the Pittsburgh Agreement not adequate because it contains loopholes for a denial on the verbal inspiration and inerrancy of the Scriptures." (Proceedings, p. 279.) What our committee stated here concerning the Pittsburgh Agreement on the doctrine of Inspiration is borne out by official reports to the latter body in which it is expressly and emphatically stated that the ULC had in no wise changed its doctrine in this matter. (Cp. also again the denunciation of Missouri's position after the death of Dr. Walter A. Maier, in 1950, by the ULC *Lutheran*, above.)

In 1950 the Committee on Fellowship of the American Lutheran Church and the Committee on Doctrinal Unity of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod presented to their respective synods a so-called COMMON CONFESSION of faith which was adopted by the two church bodies, — in the case of the Missouri Synod, despite dissenting votes and with certain provisions, for instance that the consent of other synods within the Synodical conference to the action of the Missouri Synod in this matter be secured. (The Wisconsin Synod and the Norwegian Synod have since rejected the COMMON CONFESSION.) In the official paper of the United Lutheran Church, the *Lutheran* (April 5, 1950), its editor, Dr. G. Elson Ruff, has rightly called the COMMON CONFESSION a "Missouri Compromise," and said: "It didn't try to solve the old problem." Of the doctrine concerning Holy Scripture as presented in this document he has more particularly said: "It is almost identical in wording with the 'Pittsburgh Agreement' adopted by the United Lutheran Church."

The COMMON CONFESSION does not confess, as the *Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod* does, that the Holy Scriptures are in all of their parts and words the verbally inspired Word of God and the infallible truth, also in those parts which treat of historical, geographical, and other secular matters. The very term "verbal inspiration" was purposely shunned in the COMMON CONFESSION. Dr. Wm. Arndt, then chairman of the Missouri Synod's committee, has admitted "that the term 'verbal inspiration' is not employed because it is frequently interpreted" (we should perhaps interpolate: by modernists who raise such suspicion to discredit what they reject) "to signify a mechanical view of inspiration, a mere dictation process, which would violate definite statements of the Scriptures." (*Lutheran Witness*, July 25, 1950.) This, despite the fact that mere suspicions of false doctrine are condemned as contrary to the Eighth Commandment by the same class of spokesmen, and that the Missouri Synod has never taught a mere mechanical view of inspiration, but has always disavowed it. The expression "God's verbally inspired Word" has since been used by the newly-appointed committees in the TENTATIVE "THE COMMON CONFESSION" PART II, which, as over against the original "COMMON CONFESSION" (now referred to as PART I), is to be submitted to the

next conventions of the respective synods "as indicative of, and normative for, Christian life in our congregations and synods." However, aside from the fact that the TENTATIVE "COMMON CONFESSION" PART II is not being submitted as indicative of, and normative for Christian doctrine, the position of the American Lutheran Church has been further safeguarded by the following enigmatic definition of the reluctantly used expression "God's verbally inspired Word": "that is, God moved men to write what He wanted recorded in the words which He wanted employed." (Art. VI.) This definition leaves the question: How much of the Holy Scriptures did God want men to write, and how many of its words did He want employed, whatever that again may mean? Certainly, one should not expect deniers of the plenary verbal inspiration of Holy Scripture (divine inspiration of all of its words) to hesitate to subscribe to such a sphinxlike definition!

In short, the COMMON CONFESSION is so worded that both, believers in the full verbal inspiration of Holy Scripture, and its deniers, can claim to find their teaching therein. It is admirably suited to a unionistic agreement toward church fellowship, but not to an agreement to nothing but the truth of God's Word. With Dr. Pieper and the whole Missouri Synod, standing on its historic Scriptural ground, we say: "Sinful unionism is furthermore in evidence when, in negotiations to bring about unity, ambiguous terms are used, i.e., terms that are interpreted correctly by some and misinterpreted by others . . . If we in conferring with others for the purpose of establishing Christian unity, were to use ambiguous terms — whether purposely, or from a lack of understanding of the matter in hand — we would deceive ourselves and others. We would not be promoting Christian unity but merely a union of truth and error, which God forbids." UNIONISM, Dr. F. Pieper, p. 38.

The COMMON CONFESSION is a deceptive document and presents to us a case of sinful unionism. "Deceiving, and being deceived" (II Tim. 3, 13) applies to its proponents, whatever their intentions may be.

In the interest of preserving God's Word inviolate, and the preaching of the Gospel unimpaired, for ourselves and our children, we reject it with our whole heart, and we shall continue to implore and to insist that our synod do likewise.

What Our Readers Say

"The May issue of the *Confessional Lutheran* has reached my desk, and I have read the same very carefully. It is well written; but tells a very sad and tragic story. Thank you for the labor which you placed on this issue.

"I fear that my great mistake has been that I have made an idol of the Lutheran Church. I have set up this golden calf, and have said, 'These are thy gods, O Israel, which led thee out of the land of Egypt.' No doubt God is using this New Bible episode to open my eyes, and to show me the folly of my past attitude and conduct.

"May the Lord of the Church continue to bless you richly in your fine work." Pastor, Ohio. (American Lutheran Church.)

"I wish to thank you and your associates for the splendid and courageous work you are doing in editing the *Confessional Lutheran*. May the Lord continue to bless you richly as, no doubt, He has in the past." — Pastor, Minnesota.

"The October issue of the *Confessional Lutheran* should be sent to every pastor in Synod, and to laymen, too. Most ministers are still not aware of what is going on. Information is what they need. They feel solid at heart, but feel the opposition is merely a matter of 'monks quarrels.' Propaganda for the truth will do more to bring Synod back than any other thing." — Pastor, West Coast.

"Your paper should appear twice a month and also be sent to every pastor of Synod. They just don't know nor believe what is going on by way of unionistic practices. I feel that if you solicited funds they would be forthcoming. Synod must be informed!" — Pastor, Oregon.

TO ALL WHO RECEIVE THIS MAILING OF THE "CONFESSIONAL LUTHERAN"

The present reprinting of the combined March-April-May issues of the *Confessional Lutheran*, featuring our review of the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, is being sent to all pastors of the Missouri Synod at the insistent urging of some of its readers. This mailing exhausts our printing of 10,000 copies. However, we are holding the type for another reprinting for a reasonable length of time. Pastors will want to distrib-

ute this article by the hundreds among their parishioners, who will thank them for calling their attention to it. Special prices on this thirty-six page printing are as follows:

\$25 per 100; \$3.50 per dozen; \$.35 per single copy. All postpaid. Orders are to be addressed to: The *Confessional Lutheran*, 310 S. Cherry Street, Morrison, Ill.

DR. LUTHER C. PEAK'S REVIEW OF THE "CONFESSIONAL LUTHERAN" ARTICLE ON THE REVISED STANDARD VERSION

(Edit. Note — Under the heading "Lutheran Branch Assails Revised Bible," *The Evangelist and Bible Teacher*, promoting the work of the Independent Baptist Churches of America and throughout the World, Dr. Luther C. Peak Editor, Dallas, Texas, reprinted a considerable portion of our review of the RSV in the March-April issue of the *Confessional Lutheran* and introduced it to its readers by the following comment.)

Although leadership of some of American Lutheranism has favored the adoption of the Revised Standard Version in their churches — not unnaturally those bodies connected with the National Council of Churches — a strong and evangelical section of that great church, the Missouri Synod, seems to be opposed to it. At least a paper of theirs, the *Confessional Lutheran*, a monthly edited by Rev. Paul H. Burgdorf, carries a scholarly and complete analysis of the RSV's historical background as well as an erudite evaluation — with both some pros and a lot of cons — of its text. The author has pursued his study in the methodically deliberate manner of a true Lutheran, plugged all the loopholes and securely tied the subject down with logic. His bibliography, which is included in the text, is complete.

His argument was so complete that we were sorely tempted to print it all, for fear of otherwise disturbing its construction. However, the practical consideration of limited space forbade this. Therefore we are printing some choice portions of the treatise, suggesting that readers interested in the complete article write to the *Confessional Lutheran*, 310 S. Cherry St., Morrison, Ill.

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MOTTO: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding wight of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquillity, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency.. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

VOLUME XIV

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NUMBER 6

IN THIS ISSUE: Concern for Our Church's Future — A Missourian Recommendation of the American Lutheran Church's Denial of Plenary Verbal Inspiration (1952) — A Prophecy and a Fulfillment — The Distinctive Doctrines of the Synodical Conference: Of the Church — A Review of the Text of the Common Confession — Tentative Part II of the Common Confession — The Passing of a Phantasy.

☉ **Concern for our Church's Future**

"We are much concerned about the future of our Church so far as the pure doctrine is concerned. If Dr. [L. F.] Fuerbringer several years ago already recorded the fact that our church was beginning to go to pieces (he meant this from the religious and theological point of view) he thereby pointed to something that must fill us all with great fear."

DR. J. T. MUELLER, in *Lutheraner*,
Feb. 10, 1953, p. 6.

☉ **A Missourian Recommendation of the American Lutheran Church's Denial of Plenary Verbal Inspiration (1952)**

In 1952 Augsburg Publishing House of Minneapolis reprinted two essays by the late Dr. M. Reu under the title *Two Treatises on the Means of Grace*. The first of these essays, "What is Scripture and How Can We Become Certain of Its Divine Origin?" was originally read before the Luther Academy at Wartburg Seminary in 1938 and published in *Kirchliche Zeitschrift* in 1939.. "Sponsored by the Board of Publication of the American Lutheran Church," it was then reprinted in 1940 together with an essay on "Unionism" under the title *In the Interest of Lutheran*

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Unity and sent to most Lutheran pastors in
the United States and Canada.

Contending that "God-breathed" in 2 Tim.
3:16 can be applied to Scripture only as a
"whole" but not to "every Scripture passage,"
Dr. Reu (who, though he is dead, yet
speaketh) says: "Only two translations
deserve consideration: either 'all Scripture'
which the A.V. offers, or 'every Scripture'
in the sense of 'every Scripture passage,'
which the R.V. prefers. Since we may rightly
assume that what Timothy had learned
from a child consisted in individual Scripture
passages, we might be inclined to accept the
rendering of the R.V. as the correct one.
However, the following words would hardly
fit, because not every Scripture passage,
although written down under the influence
of the Holy Spirit, is profitable for doctrine,
for reproof, for correction, etc. (f.i. the
passage Gen. 12:6, 'and the Canaanite was

then in the land.')

" (*Two Treatises on the
Means of Grace*, p. 17.)

And the above denial of plenary verbal
inspiration is recommended by the 1953 Cata-
log of Concordia Publishing House, p. 874 :
"This volume offers reprints of two essays by
the sainted Dr. Reu which are perhaps as
timely today as when they first appeared.
The frequent requests coming to Reu Memor-
ial Library and the eagerness with which
seminarians acquire used copies testify to
the abiding value of these two treatises.
Emil W. Matzner (Wartburg Seminary)."

In view of these facts, how can Missourians
still speak of having made progress with
the ALC in the doctrine of the inspiration of
Scripture? Is it not rather true, that some
Missourians are now advocating Dr. Reu's
false doctrine concerning the inspiration of
Holy Scripture?
T. D.

● A Prophecy and a Fulfillment The Prophecy

"We fear that *The Expositor's Greek
Testament* will exert an evil influence
because it is wholly done in the spirit of
modernistic theology and it has gained a
wide dissemination." (F. Pieper, *Christian
Dogmatics*, original German edition, Vol. 1,
p. 415: tr. by P. H. B.)

A Fulfillment

"Evidently the passages" Romans 11, 7;
II Cor. 3, 14; Rom. 11, 25ff; I Thess. 2, 16,
of which the Missouri Synod confesses in its
Brief Statement of its doctrinal position:
Scripture clearly teaches, and we teach
accordingly . . . that there will be no general
conversion, a conversion *en masse*, of the
Jewish nation, "are not as clear as the
BRIEF STATEMENT implies. Cf. EXPOSI-
TOR'S GREEK TESTAMENT." (A Report
to the Praesidium of the Lutheran Church-
Missouri Synod from the Advisory Commit-
tee on Doctrine and Practice, August 15, 1951,
p. 17. Accepted and released to the clergy
of the Missouri Synod on January 25, 1952,
by the Praesidium of the Lutheran Church-
Missouri Synod as its own report, to be pre-
sented to the next convention of The Lutheran
Church-Missouri Synod.) P. H. B.

● The Distinctive Doctrines of the Synodical Conference: Of the Church

What It Is

The Church, in the proper sense of the
term, is the aggregate of all true believers
in Christ. All those, and only those who be-

lieve in Christ, are members of the Church. Whoever believes in Christ is a member of the Church, whether he be in external fellowship with an orthodox, or in external union with a heterodox congregation, or in no external connection with any church at all. On the other hand, whoever does not believe in Christ, is not a member of the Church, although he be a person of good external standing in an orthodox congregation, or even a minister or high dignitary in it. In short, *faith in Christ is the all-deciding factor in regard to church-membership*. The wicked and the hypocrites, although they have external fellowship with the Church, form no part of it. The Church is the *spiritual body* of Christ, the "congregation of saints," whose hearts, through faith in Christ, are ruled by the Holy Spirit, whilst all unbelievers, however holy in outward appearance, are in the power of Satan, and members of his kingdom (Eph. 2,2).

In order to maintain the true conception of the Church, what is necessarily or commonly connected with it must not be confounded with the Church *itself*. For instance, Christ is the *head* of the Church, but not the Church *itself*, the Church being His spiritual body (Eph. 1, 22. 23). Again the Word of God and the Sacraments are necessarily connected with the Church, they being the *seed* (I Pet. 1,23; Mark. 4,26.27; Titus 3,5.6), and the *bread* (John 6,51 compared with John 8,31; 6,68; I Cor. 12,13), and consequently, also the *true marks* of the Church, but they are not the Church *itself*, nor part of it. Finally, Christians dwelling together in the same place are *bound* to unite also in *external fellowship* for the purpose of preaching and hearing the Word of God, etc., and they may enter into a larger ecclesiastical organization with other Churches, but *no external ecclesiastical organization of any kind* is the Church itself, or part of it, the Church being "properly *nothing else* than the congregation of all believers and saints" (Augsburg Confession, Article VIII). The Church is not a mere sum of *ordinances*, institutions, ceremonies, etc., but the great spiritual body of men believing in Christ.

Importance of This Doctrine

It is of great importance to retain this true definition of the Church, because it may easily be shown that all errors concerning this article of the Christian faith spring from forgetting the simple truth that the Church properly is "*nothing else* than the congregation of believers." Moreover, by retaining

this truth, we shall not content ourselves with belonging merely to the external communion of the Church, but we shall rather earnestly take heed that we belong to the internal communion of saints, and remain therein unto our end, and thus in eternity. Finally, by keeping in view that the Church is the congregation of believers, we shall not, for the purpose of building and extending the Church, resort to wrong means, such as temporal power, external force, human ordinances, church fairs, church-fellowship with errorists; for by such means *faith in Christ* is neither wrought nor preserved, but, on the contrary, hindered or destroyed. Keeping in mind that the Church is the congregation of believers, we shall rather faithfully and diligently use the means ordained of God, which alone produce and preserve faith in Christ in the hearts of men, to wit, the preaching of the pure Gospel and the right administration of the Sacraments. The stress laid on the "*pure doctrine*" or "*pure Gospel*" must not be ridiculed, since the Gospel generates and preserves only so far as it is pure. . . .

The Church is, and Always Remains, in This Life Invisible

As the Church is nothing else than the congregation of believers, and God only, the searcher of hearts, knows those who truly believe, it is, and always remains, in this life *invisible*. (Luke 17, 20; II Tim. 2, 19.) The Church, in the proper sense of the term, is not in part only invisible, in part, however, visible, the audible and visible means of grace constituting its "visible side." What is necessarily connected with the Church, is not to be confounded with the Church *itself*. Although wherever the Word of God is found, we are to find the Church, yet the Word of God forms no part of the Church, the component parts of the Church being only the *believers*. This may be illustrated by an example. Man cannot live without air and his daily bread. But the air and the daily bread do not form an essential part of *man*. So the Church lives by the Word of God, but the Word is not an essential part of the Church. The Church itself, therefore, cannot be called visible on account of the audible and visible means of grace.

The Distinctive Doctrines and Usages of the General Bodies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States. — The Synodical Conference, by Rev. Prof. F. Pieper, 1893, pp. 119-123.

❶ A Review of the Text of the COMMON CONFSSION

by A. V. Kuster

(Editor's note: This is an essay which was read to the Northern Indiana Pastoral Conference at Gary, Ind., on Oct. 25, 1951. It was accepted by the Conference on Oct. 26, 1951. The author, in submitting the essay for publication, has made a half dozen minor changes from the original manuscript, in the interest of smoother reading and greater clarity.)

The Committee that assigned this subject did wisely in confining the subject to the text of the *Common Confession*. The action which has been taken with regard to it by various church bodies and parties since its publication is another subject. The text of the document ought to be considered first of all by itself. That helps to keep our thinking straight.

On the other hand, this cannot mean that the essayist is to read the text of the *Common Confession* and be seated. He has been asked to review it.

Let us look at this document from the viewpoint of the purpose which it is meant to serve. It was brought into being to serve a purpose, namely, to resolve at least some of the doctrinal differences that have separated the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church. It is meant to be a difference-settling document; that is the class, or genus, in which it belongs. That is the viewpoint from which it must be surveyed. Its ultimate value, whether great or small, will be measured according to the answer to these questions: How many of the doctrinal differences which have obtained between the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church has it treated, and to what extent has a definite, Scriptural decision been given in the document, to the satisfaction of both parties?

The method of procedure in this short essay shall be this: Taking three of the doctrines treated in the *Common Confession*, one at a time, we shall proceed to set forth the Missouri Synod's position in the matter, then the position of the American Lutheran Church (including that of the synods that made up the A.L.C.), whereupon we shall be able to see what the traditional points of agreement and of disagreement have been. This will establish in each case the "status controversiae" and reveal the point of contention. The final step will be to look at the respective article in the *Common Confession* to find to what extent the text of the "Common Confession" has resolved the point or points of difference.

Election

The doctrine of Election being one of the oldest, if not the oldest one, over which contention has arisen, we treat of it first.

To refresh our memories concerning the Missouri Synod's teaching concerning Election, we bring the following excerpts from the *Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod* (Pars. 35-39): "By election of grace we mean this truth, that all those who by the grace of God alone, for Christ's sake, through the means of grace, are brought to faith, are justified, sanctified and preserved in faith *here in time*, that all these have already from eternity been endowed by God with faith, justification, sanctification, and preservation in faith, and this *for the same reason*, namely, by grace alone, for Christ's sake, and by way of the means of grace . . . according to Scripture the faith which the elect have in time belongs to the spiritual blessings with which God has endowed them by His eternal election . . . Our Lutheran Confession also testifies (*Triglot*, p. 1065, No. 8, M., p. 705): 'The eternal election of God, however, not only foresees and foreknows the salvation of the elect, but is also, from the gracious will and pleasure of God in Christ Jesus, a cause which procures, works, helps, and promotes our salvation and what pertains thereto; and upon this our salvation is so founded that the gates of hell cannot prevail against it, Matt. 16, 18, as it is written John 10, 28: "Neither shall any man pluck My sheep out of My hand;" and again 13, 48: "And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."' . . . there is no election of wrath, or predestination to *damnation* . . . To be sure, it is necessary to observe the Scriptural distinction between the election of grace and the universal will of grace. This universal will of God embraces all men; the election of grace, however, does not embrace all, but only a definite number, 'whom God hath from the beginning chosen to salvation,' 2 Thess. 2, 13 . . . and while the universal will of grace is frustrated in the case of most men, Matt. 22, 14; Luke 7, 20, the election of grace attains its end with all whom it embraces. Rom. 8, 28-30 . . . Furthermore, by election of grace, Scripture does not mean that *one* part of God's counsel of salvation according to which He will receive into heaven those who persevere in faith unto the end, but, on the contrary, Scripture means this, that God, before the foundation of the world, from pure grace, because of the redemption of Christ, has chosen for His own a definite number of

persons out of the corrupt mass and has determined to bring them, through Word and Sacrament, to faith and salvation."

According to the Missouri Synod teaching, therefore, the child of God hears the Word of God: "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth," (2 Thess. 2, 13) and he says, "Yea Lord, I believe Thou hast chosen me. This is also a cause of my faith and salvation. I thank Thee for this Thy unbounded grace to me." The believer's faith is planted firmly and surely in God's promise to him that he is elect in Christ. His inclusion in the election of grace is revealed in the immutable vow of God; it cannot fail. He will not, and ought not, let go of this faith that he is an elect of God in Christ, for anything in the world. Here is another bulwark against the *monster of uncertainty* with which the devil daily besets the Christian.

The Ohio and Iowa Synods, and subsequently the A.L.C., have rejected the doctrine of Election when it is thus defined, calling it Crypto-Calvinism and worse. There have been various definitions of the doctrine of Election emanating from these sources through the years. These definitions define Election as a different thing from that which the Missouri Synod has set forth. These definitions define God's election as merely the general, universal will of God that He wants all men to be saved, insofar as this will has been realized. It is not an infallible decree of God, pronounced before the world's foundation, extending over a definite number of people (to mention a few features essential to a Scriptural and Confessional definition of the term), but it is a rather relative matter. It all depends. At some times and in some localities within American Lutheran Church circles, it has been said to depend on the faith which God foresaw the Christian would have (commonly known as the *intuitu fidei* doctrine or the doctrine of Election in view of faith). At other times and localities within the same church group, it has been said to depend at least partly on how a man conducted himself in time, on the extent of his resistance against God's grace or on the condition of one's personality or the psychological status in which a person is found in time, whether or not he would be elect.

We bring a few examples of such positions.

In 1881 the Ohio Synod declared "that the foreordination of the elect to eternal life has taken place in view of faith, i.e., in view of the merits of Christ appropriated by

faith." (Quoted in *Synodalbericht*, Syn. Conf., 1884, p. 21.)

In 1920 the Wisconsin District of the Ohio Synod taught, "God has been merciful to all men and will have all men to be saved. How does it come to an election? Through man, because grace cannot perform its work in all men. The fact that in spite of the equally earnest calling, some are not saved is due to their wilful resistance. A natural resistance is found in all men, but God overcomes it. If, however, a man, besides this, resists wilfully, stubbornly, obstinately, the grace of God cannot accomplish anything in him, for it does not force him." (Joint-Synod Record, p. 30.)

In 1893 Dr. G. Fritschel declared (note that this has a little different twist to it): "The Iowa Synod also teaches the particularism of predestination, but maintains with the Confessions that it is nevertheless the same gracious will as the universal. According to the latter, God will have all men to be saved, yet not unconditionally but in the order of faith. Now since He knows from eternity how many there are who suffer themselves to be saved within this order, the universal will to save all believers becomes the will to save just a certain number. The universal will thus becomes particular without suffering any alteration, but simply by passing under the aspect of the divine knowledge." (*Unterscheidungslehren*, p. 64.)

In 1946 the So. Dakota District of the American Lutheran Church said: "Of the Election of Grace. We object to this old Missouri heresy which has not been changed or modified in the least since Dr. Walther introduced it in 1868 and reaffirmed it in 1877 and 1881, and we reject it as masked or crypto-calvinism. It is the same old raven with a new gravy." (From the minutes of the Fifteenth Annual Convention of the So. Dakota District of the A.L.C., May 2-6, 1946, Aberdeen, So. Dakota.)

The *Lutheran Standard*, official organ of the A.L.C., April 15, 1950, p. 3, tells us: "Here is our definition of predestination: 'Divine election or predestination is that act of God by which He chose for Himself, from eternity, all those in whom His saving grace would accomplish its blessed purpose.'"

To sum up, the A.L.C. and the Missouri Synod teaching agree in this, that both maintain that there is such a thing as a doctrine of an Election of grace. From that point on everything is different in the two theologies because the definitions of the term

are different. The meaning of all the terms used in connection with the doctrine of Election vary in accordance with how one defines God's Election.

In Missourian theology "elect" and "choose" mean an infallible decree of God. Particular persons are elected unto faith, perseverance, and eternal salvation in Christ, endowed with these treasures before they are born. In A. L. C. theology "to be elected" and "chosen" mean to realize, in time, only the universal will of God that men should believe the Gospel. Missouri Synod men have made the point that the A. L. C. has no real doctrine of the Election of grace at all; but instead of that, under the same name, a doctrine of the universal gracious will of God viewed from a certain aspect.

The solution of the problem as far as the Missouri Synod is concerned is a proper definition of the doctrine of the Election of grace such as we find in the *Brief Statement*. Do we find such a solution in the *Common Confession*?

The first half of Art. IV of the *Common Confession* gives us a statement as to who is elect, but gives no definition of Election. It reads: "God from eternity, solely because of His grace in Christ and without any cause whatever in man, elected as His own all those whom He makes and keeps members of His kingdom and heirs of eternal life."

The second half of Art. IV speaks of assurance, but still brings no definition of God's Election. It reads: "The Holy Spirit by the Gospel has called us and assured us of our status before God, testifying to us that He has chosen us for Himself in Christ from the foundation of the world, and by the imputation of Christ's righteousness has given us the assurance that he will present us faultless before the throne of His glory. Cf. Acts 13," etc. The phrase "from the foundation of the world" seems to convey a decisive tone, at first blush. But it must be borne in mind that in all the years of controversy no one on either side ever denied that the universal gracious will of God is eternal. Thus also that phrase loses special significance.

In the COMMON CONFESSION we look in vain for the resolving of at least these controverted points, essential to a definition of terms: What is the nature of the act of God in election? Are the elect a definite number out of the corrupt mass of mankind? What, exactly, does the Christian's assurance rest upon with respect to the doctrine of election? Scripture answers all these questions clearly.

Conversion

To refresh ourselves as to the Missouri Synod's traditional position on the doctrine of Conversion, we read excerpts from the *Brief Statement*, pars. 10, 12, 15: "10. We teach that conversion consists in this, that a man, having learned from the Law of God that he is a lost and condemned sinner, is brought to faith in the Gospel, which offers him forgiveness of sins and eternal salvation for the sake of Christ's vicarious satisfaction, Acts 11, 21; Luke 24, 46-47; Acts 26, 18, 22. On the basis of these clear statements of the Holy Scriptures we reject every kind of synergism, that is, the doctrine that conversion is wrought not by the grace and power of God alone, but in part also by the cooperation of man himself, by man's right conduct, his right attitude, his right self-determination, his lesser guilt or less evil conduct as compared with others, his refraining from wilful resistance, or anything else whereby man's conversion and salvation is taken out of the gracious hands of God and made to depend on what man does or leaves undone. For this refraining from wilful resistance or from any kind of resistance is also solely a work of grace, which 'changes unwilling into willing men' . . .

"The Formula of Concord describes the mystery which confronts us here not as a mystery in man's heart (a 'psychological' mystery), but teaches that, when we try to understand why 'one is hardened, blinded, given over to a reprobate mind, while another, who is indeed in the same guilt, is converted again,' we enter the domain of the unsearchable judgments of God and ways past finding out, which are not revealed to us in His Word, but which we shall know in eternal life, I Cor. 13, 12."

The doctrine of Conversion current in A. L. C. circles, although it varies in detail, centers about the assumption that there are two types of resistance to the gracious operation of God in man — the natural resistance and the wilful resistance. Natural resistance is said to be found in all men and the Holy Ghost is always able to overcome it in the act of conversion; it is not as serious as wilful resistance. Wilful resistance is an unnecessary addition to natural resistance; the converting operation of the Holy Ghost can never overcome it when it is present in man. Conversion or non-conversion, therefore, in a given case, will always hinge upon the presence or absence of wilful resistance.

As an example, Dr. Geo. Fritschel said the following of natural and wilful resist-

ance: "Natural resistance is merely a different expression for original depravity in its manifestation . . . Natural resistance hinders conversion and puts many obstacles in its way, but it does not prevent conversion . . . The effect of wilful resistance is that the work of grace is not only hindered but that it must cease entirely if the self-hardening becomes permanent. This does not mean that conversion is in every case rendered impossible for all time. For saving grace may start afresh and may the second or the tenth time accomplish that which was impossible before . . . The question as to the origin of wilful resistance, like the origin of sin itself, leads us into the depths of personal, inner life, unknown to us, and we are here confronted by a psychological mystery, which we therefore do not attempt to solve." (*The Doctrine of Conversion according to Hoenecke's Dogmatics.*)

Missouri's spokesmen have continually pointed out that such teaching of two kinds of resistance in man's heart has no foundation in Scripture or the Confessions, tampers with the doctrine of the total depravity of man; since it assumes that unconverted man may at times be other than at enmity against God, and deprecates the power of the grace of God, since it says that the Holy Spirit is unable ever to overcome the so-called wilful resistance, without using "irresistible force." By the way, Missouri Synod spokesmen have been forced continually to deny the false implication that they teach "irresistible grace."

Other A.L.C. men have avoided the term psychological mystery," but used the idea of "refraining from wilful resistance," or the idea of an attitude of "mere passivity" to characterize the sinner in the process of conversion. The idea here seems to be that unconverted man is capable of adopting or submitting to a non-resistant or neutral attitude, or to be suspended in a state of neutrality or passivity at the time of his conversion.

Dr. M. Reu's "Christian Dogmatics," text used at Wartburg Seminary for over 20 years since 1928 (in all its editions) is saturated with these concepts of man's passivity and non-resistance. We find it in Dr. Reu's "Christian Ethics," p. 131. We find expressions of this sort in the A.L.C.'s "Lutheran Standard" as recently as Nov. 17, 1945, p. 4, May 21, 1949, p. 3, and Dec. 17, 1949, p. 3.

Missouri Synod spokesmen, as, for example, Dr. Fr. Pieper in his "Conversion and Election" (German "Zur Einigung"), have

pointed out that the Iowan or A.L.C. doctrine of a two-fold resistance of natural man and the passivity of man in conversion, as well as their doctrine of a restricted grace of God that is never able to overcome the wilful resistance of natural man — these doctrines confront the Missouri Synod with soul-destroying errors in fundamental articles of faith.

The A.L.C. and the Missouri Synod, in the doctrine of Conversion, have always agreed and never have disagreed in these points: Conversion takes place when the sinner is brought to faith in Christ as the Savior; conversion is the work of the Holy Ghost. They have disagreed traditionally on these points: A two-fold resistance of natural man toward the converting grace of God vs. a constant, universal, wilful resistance of natural man; assumption of an absolute state of passivity on the part of natural man at the time of conversion vs. the assertion of wilful and stubborn resistance until the Holy Ghost changes the unwilling one into a willing one in conversion; the assumption that the grace of God is unable to overcome wilful resistance in natural man vs. the assertion of the almighty grace of God in conversion.

These are the points of controversy.

Has Art. VII of the *Common Confession* settled them? It reads: "The sinner's conversion takes place when God brings the contrite sinner to faith in Christ as his Savior. This change of heart with respect to sin is the work of God the Holy Spirit, without any co-operation whatsoever from sinful man. No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost' . . ."

One can quickly perceive that the Article speaks of matters that have never been in controversy, except possibly in the phrase, "without any co-operation whatsoever from sinful man." But these words are ambiguous. According to the Missouri Synod view they would mean: In spite of wicked, wilful opposition on the part of the unconverted sinner. According to the A.L.C. view they would mean: Without the unconverted sinner doing anything because he is in a state of absolute passivity or neutrality. A decision in the matter cannot possibly be extracted from the phrase "without any cooperation whatsoever from sinful man."

Again in this Article we fail to find a settlement of the points in controversy. And again, Scripture speaks clearly on all of these points.

The Word of God, or the Bible

We shall assume that we are all well acquainted with the Missouri Synod's doctrine of Scripture. We shall therefore save the time it would take to describe it and go on.

There was apparent agreement among the Synods of Missouri, Iowa, Ohio, and Buffalo, in the doctrines of the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture, until the 1920's. During negotiations for union some of the Ohio men became sharply aware of a denial of the teaching that all the words of the Bible are the inspired and inerrant word of God, on the part of the leading teachers of the Iowa Synod. But the union of the synods took place. In the resultant A.L.C., the trend or school of thought represented by Iowa has gained full rights and wide acceptance for its views on inspiration.

This new theory of inspiration was appropriated from the liberal theology which ruled the German Church at the beginning of the century. In this theology the verbally inspired and errorless Bible had been given up. Its proponents spoke of divine inspiration, but abhorred the suggestion that every word of the Bible is inspired; for that, they argued, would have to mean that God "dictated" the holy writings; it would have to mean that the writers were lifeless automats. It was said that the prophets and apostles wrote merely the history of God's revelation to mankind, and that the 66 books of the Bible constitute a complete and perfect whole or unit, which is an awesome masterpiece of literature. Since mere human effort could not have produced such fine history, they concluded that the Holy Spirit must have had a hand in it. The Holy Spirit's part in co-operating with the holy writers was called inspiration. Because the Bible contained the history of God's revelation, and because the Holy Spirit was co-operative in producing it, they were ready even to call the Bible the Word of God, but certainly not in the sense that the very words were given to the writers by the Spirit. Some of them did admit that the Holy Ghost occasionally furnished a *fitting word* or expression to the authors which they might not have hit upon without such divine aid. When Paul got stuck for a fitting word, the Holy Ghost came across with it.

Summarizing Dr. Reu's view of inspiration, we find that he viewed the Bible as God's "description" of His self-disclosure in history and of man's reaction over against this revelation of salvation. In 2 Tim. 3, 16 he found merely that God is the "principle author"

of the Old Testament. He asserted that the influence of the Holy Spirit upon the sacred writers "embraced the following three elements: 1. impulse to write, 2. suggestion of the subject matter, 3. suggestion of the word." (Luth. Dogm. 1941-42 ed., Vol. 2, p. 206). Note: "Word." Here Dr. Reu habitually used the singular. He did not take the position that *all the words* of the Bible are God's words. He wrote: "Paul at times apparently is wrestling with the language . . . And yet the finished product is after all not his word but God's word, even the selection of the fitting word was taught him by the Spirit." (*In the Interest of Lutheran Unity*, p 68f.)

Treating of 2 Tim. 3, 16, Dr. Reu wrote: "All Scripture then has its analogy in 'all the building' in Ephesians 2, 21, or 'scripture' as designation of a known quantity is treated as a proper noun, as 'all Jerusalem.' . . . The statement is made about the written word of the Old Testament in its whole extent that it has been produced by the breathing of the Spirit of God. Whether some one else participated in its production is not stated, it is neither maintained nor denied. Emphasized, however, is the fact that God was the 'first cause' in producing it." (*Ibid.*, p. 62.) Dr. Reu refrained from assuming that there were errors in the Bible, out of a certain holy reverence which he felt toward it. It was a theological deduction, not an *a priori* assumption, that the Bible possessed inerrancy.

Dr. Reu's successor at Wartburg Seminary was Dr. Mattes, who, in 1945, in an essay entitled "The Authority of Scripture," voiced these sentiments: "Are we to conclude with the aid of Aristotelian logic that because God's revelation is inspired that therefore every incidental statement found in Scripture, even when it has nothing to do with the revelation as such is also inspired? . . . We will admit that the defenders of the old dictation theory were at least consistent when they applied inspiration to every word." Note the division of matter in the Bible, according to Dr. Mattes: "We claim for the Scriptures absolute inerrancy with respect to all theological truth; we repel any suggestion or suspicion of deception, even in those subjects which only form the framework, but not the contents of the record of revelation." Dr. Mattes pointed out, in great detail, many inaccuracies which he insisted are in the Bible, chiefly in matters of astronomy, history, etc., and at the same time he professed "confidence in the absolute authority of Holy Scriptures as the infallible test

of theological truth, an inerrant guide in all matters of faith and practice." Dr. Mattes, having examined 2 Tim. 3, 16, 2 Pet. 1, 20-21, and 1 Cor. 12, 12-13, which to us are *sedes doctrinae* on inspiration, said that he could see nothing in them that speaks of the nature or extent of the Bible's inspiration. But Dr. Mattes believed in the "record of God's revelation" in Scripture, on the basis of the "Testimonium Spiritus internum."

We desist from further quotation. It should be clear by this time that the terms "revelation," "supplying content and fitting word," "Scriptures in their entirety," "inspiration," and "inerrant," are technical terms in influential circles within the A.L.C. These terms have been invested with a meaning which is foreign to Missouri Synod teaching. We are not confronted here with the question whether or not these terms may be understood in various ways; but with the fact that they *are understood* in a different sense from, and sometimes in direct contradiction to, the sense in the Missouri Synod teaching.

The points in controversy in this doctrine may be stated in the following questions:

Are all the words of the Bible inspired by God? Do we assume that there may be inaccuracies in the Bible, or do we assume that there cannot be any inaccuracies in it, even in details, and even with regard to history, geography, and other such matters? Is the doctrine of Inspiration clearly drawn from the *sedes doctrinae* such as 2 Tim. 3, 16, or must it be implied or deduced in some other way? What is the proper definition of "verbal inspiration"?

The last two questions in controversy are not treated at all in the *Common Confession*.

What about the first two? Let us go into the text of the document. This matter is treated in Art. V, the first two paragraphs under the heading "The Word." We read:

"Through the Holy Scriptures, which God caused to be written by men chosen and inspired by Him, God instructs and assures us regarding His will for us. The Holy Scriptures constitute His Word to men, centering in the revelation of Himself in the person and work of Jesus Christ for our salvation. Through the Holy Scriptures God continues to speak to men in all ages until the end of time. He speaks as the infallible and unchanging God, whose message to mankind never changes." So far there is nothing to pin down the fact that all the words of the Bible are God-inspired words; or that there must necessarily be no errors

even in details. We read on: "Since the Holy Spirit by divine inspiration supplied to the holy writers content and fitting word, therefore we acknowledge the Holy Scriptures in their entirety as the inspired Word of God." Here we note the phrase "content and fitting word." Taking the words of this phrase, without comment, in their bare sense, they do not say, nor do they have in them the meaning: "all the words."

It is a matter of simple syntax and lexicography. Besides, the erring doctors of the A.L.C. tell us that this phrase does not signify all the words of the Bible to them. We note also the phrase, "We acknowledge the Holy Scriptures in their entirety as the inspired Word of God." These words give rise to various notions. A Missouri Synod man, seeing the word "entirety" and by a process of deduction taking it to mean "all the words," might have the conviction that this is Missouri Synod doctrine. Men like Dr. Reu tell us that the phrase "in their entirety as the inspired Word of God" means that God is the chief author of all the books of the Bible, which are meant to be a unit or harmonious whole. Men like Dr. Mattes tell us that that phrase indicates that the matters of theological truth in the Bible are divine. One thing is certain, when one views the matter objectively, and that is that a person must put a meaning into the words of this phrase before he can get one out of them.

The next two sentences read: "His Holy Spirit testifies in our hearts that His Word is true, that He will keep all His promises to us, and that our faith in Him is not in vain. We therefore recognize the Holy Scriptures as God's inerrant Word, and this Word of God alone shall establish articles of faith." Note the words "We therefore recognize the Holy Scriptures as God's inerrant," etc. "Therefore!" Why? Because the Bible teaches it in express words? No. As we observed before, that is nowhere touched upon in these paragraphs. It is because of the secondarily reliable phenomenon mentioned in the previous sentence, that the "Holy Spirit testifies in our hearts." Men like Dr. Mattes will tell us: "These two sentences say just exactly what we were explaining to you before. We feel the testimony of the Holy Spirit in our hearts and that makes us recognize the Scriptures as true and right in their theological content, and as reliable sources of articles of faith." This is not phantasy, but stark realism. Listen to these excerpts from a letter: "Yes, I believe there are what you might call histor-

ical and scientific inaccuracies in the Bible, but that nevertheless it is absolutely inerrant in the revelation of God and His will and His truth. These errors have nothing to do with the faith and in no wise disturb my regard for the absolute authority of Scripture." (From a letter of Prof. Dr. Mattes, dogmatician of the A.L.C., to Pastor Victor A. Bartelt of Milwaukee, Feb. 16, 1944.) And, to hasten on, men like Dr. Mattes, and also Dr. Reu, can accept also the final sentence on this point: "We pledge ourselves to teach all things taught in the Holy Scriptures, and nothing but that which is taught by God in the Holy Scriptures." According to such men, part of the Scripture is "taught by God" and part of it is the human writers' "own reflection."

(The sentence "We therefore recognize . . ." begins a new paragraph in the *Common Confession*. This was not indicated above because it involves no difference of meaning or intent in the document.)

Where is the trouble, in this matter of establishing the inerrancy of Scripture? It is not in the sincerity and earnestness of any of the individuals concerned. We believe the trouble is this: The *Common Confession* has not unmistakably asserted the *inspiration* of all the words of the Bible, and therefore it cannot possibly assert the *inerrancy* of all the words and details of Scripture. Whatever is not inspired is not inerrant. Both concepts must be jealously guarded, and there must be no linguistic or logical loophole; otherwise men talk and think past each other.

Also with regard to the points in controversy on Inspiration, Scripture speaks clearly.

❁ Tentative Part II of the COMMON CONFESSION

by A. V. Kuster

Many are willing to agree to the inadequacy of the *Common Confession* of 1950, as shown in the above essay. But the questions arise: Are not the inadequacies repaired in "Tentative Part II" of the *Common Confession*, submitted by the doctrinal committees of the ALC and the Missouri Synod a few months ago? Has not the doctrinal situation changed during the last several months?

Let us see.

We shall examine "Tentative Part II" with regard to the three doctrines treated in the above essay.

Inspiration

Concerning Inspiration, the following reference has been sandwiched into "Tentative Part II," Par. VI, under the heading "The Church and Education": "The Holy Scriptures are God's verbally inspired Word, that is, God moved men to write what He wanted recorded in the words which He wanted employed. They alone constitute God's inerrant Word to men."

In the first of these two sentences, we find a thoroughly unsatisfactory definition of the term "verbal inspiration." Rank modernists will admit that the Bible has in it "what God wanted" and that some of its words are "the words which He wanted employed." God was satisfied with the result, the Bible. Few will deny that. We would rather have a definition of "verbal inspiration" to the effect that *God moved the holy men to write all the words of the Bible*, just as these words found their place in the original manuscripts. Thus, "Tentative Part II" brings an unsatisfactory definition of "Verbal inspiration."

It fails to rule out the *possibility* of *inaccuracies in all details*. That is a point in controversy.

It fails to state that "verbal inspiration" is expressly taught in Scripture, and is more than a pious theological deduction.

Conversion

Concerning Conversion in "Tentative Part II," we find a passing reference under Par. I in the sentence: "It confronts a man-kind which, without the gracious working of the Holy Spirit, is totally corrupt in trespasses and sins, is completely blinded to the will of God, and willfully resists every endeavor of God to save it from destruction."

The sentence states a certain amount of truth. But it is not complete. It is inadequate to safeguard the Missourian, Scriptural position against the Laternmannian notions prevalent in the A.L.C. We have heard A.L.C. theologians maintain that the Holy Spirit, in some mysterious psychological manner, removes a sinner's resistance to His gracious operation *before Conversion*, thus putting the sinner in a temporarily passive state, in which he desists from wilful resistance, and is then converted. This furnishes an "explanation" for the conversion.

"Tentative Part II," like the original *Common Confession*, says nothing about the difference that is supposed to exist between two kinds of resistance to the Holy Spirit, according to some ALC theologians. This should be of deep concern to Missouri Synod people.

The *Common Confession* and "Tentative Part II" do not say that the Holy Ghost can and does overcome wilful resistance in whom He will, thus making unwilling ones into willing ones, by His drawing. In this respect the composite document is silent, or negative.

The old ALC errors have not been given up. Witness:

Lutheran Standard, Dec. 13, 1952, p. 16. Dr. E. W. Matzner casts suspicion upon Pieper, "Christian Dogmatics," Vol. II, as possibly teaching "irresistible grace."

Lutheran Standard, Oct. 27, 1951, p. 3. Dr. Wm. N. Emch goes all out in repeating the old ALC distinction between natural and wilful resistance, as we have outlined it above. Dr. Emch later defended this article in a letter to the Doctrinal Unity Committee, and did not give up his position. Dr. Emch espouses a type of Latermannianism.

Election

Concerning Election, we find a reference in Art. X of "Tentative Part II": "The Church in all its activities in the world remembers that its life in Christ is eternal. The fact that the Church exists, that men believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, is due ultimately to the eternal election of God, who" (here Eph. 1:4 and 2 Thess. 2:13a-14 are quoted). "God by His Word and Sacrament calls men to faith and keeps them in that faith unto the end."

Here we have matters expressed which have never been in controversy between the Missouri Synod and the ALC. Both bodies have spoken highly of what each defines as "the eternal election of God" and both believe that the quoted passages are in the Bible.

We still have no Scriptural definition of the Election of Grace, in either document. What is it?

Still no statement that the elect are a definite number out of the corrupt mass of mankind.

Still no statement that the Christian's assurance rests upon his predestination by

God to faith in Christ, before the foundation of the world, as a cause of his salvation.

Nowhere in the *Common Confession* or in "Tentative Part II" is the door closed to the error of predestination in view of foreseen faith (*intuitu fidei*).

The old ALC errors have not been given up. Witness:

Lutheran Standard, Oct. 27, 1951, Dr. Emch's article, beginning on p. 3, teaches election in view of foreseen faith (*intuitu fidei*). (Cp. *Confessional Lutheran*, Jan., 1952, p. 9-11; May, 1952, p. 52-54.)

Lutheran Standard, Sept. 6, 1952, p. 3, again teaches election in view of foreseen faith. (Cp. *Confessional Lutheran*, Dec., 1952, p. 140.)

Lutheran Standard, Jan. 12, 1952, p. 15. The "plan of salvation" is taught as a substitute for the Election of grace.

Lutheran Outlook, Dec., 1951, p. 360. Prof. Walter G. Tilmanns of the ALC's Wartburg College, disavowed predestination to salvation.

The union documents known as the *Common Confession* and "Tentative Part II" are a pitiful piece of patchwork, especially when compared with the good old *Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod*.

☉ The Passing of a Phantasy

By Walter P. Scheitel, Sanborn, Minnesota

A statement often repeated as a defense of Missouri's continued negotiations with the ALC since 1938 is the statement that the ALC was "straightening out" its relations with the American Lutheran Conference, even getting ready to leave that fellowship. The undersigned personally heard this claim made by two members of the Missouri Synod's Committee on Doctrinal Unity at a mixed conference of Synodical Conference pastors and professors in North Mankato, Minn., on October 1 and 2, 1951. One of the members of this committee added the embellishment that the ALC didn't have much fellowship with the other synods of the American Lutheran Conference. This was at a time when the negotiations looking toward merger of

various synods within the American Lutheran Conference were already well begun! In a conversation on October 2 which the writer had with the two representatives of the Unity Committee referred to above, one of them even used one of the tenses of the word "perjury" to describe what the ALC's Committee on Fellowship would be guilty of, if such a separation of the ALC from the American Lutheran Conference did not take place.

In the discussion on the floor a brother who is well acquainted with the negotiations and conduct of so-called "unity" efforts made the point that he had been informed by Missouri's representatives in 1938 that the ALC was leaving the American Lutheran Conference. "I am impatiently waiting," said he. To this the two representatives of Missouri's Unity Committee said nothing — as, alas, to many other considerations and facts urged by the brethren. There did appear an article entitled "The Apostolic Psha!" in the *Concordia Theological Monthly* for Dec. 1951, authored by Prof. Martin H. Franzmann, some portions of which appear to us to be an effort to salve some one's conscience for the absence of a full and real rebuttal in such discussions. So, for example, one finds the words (p. 909): "A sentence or two, a brace of facts — and let the rest be silence. Our Lord was silent, dreadfully silent, sometimes too, and there were questions that He would not answer." . . . "One wonders, incidentally, how much patience St. Paul would have had with our 'periodical' type of theologian — the kind that reads all the periodicals regularly and some of Scriptures periodically." If these words refer to the sort of discussions on the Common Confession in which representatives of Missouri's Unity Committee took part — with little honor to that document — then it is in place to point out the following: Silence in face of the facts urged by brethren is not Christlike silence! It is one of our duties to that Lord who died for us, and before whom we must some day stand, to be informed, insofar as it is possible to be so. To limit our reading to various publications (official) which either say nothing on burning issues or even bring misinformation is unthinkable and indefensible. To imply that this means a neglect of Scriptural studies is a low insinuation, a violation of the Eighth Commandment. And if the charge of neglecting Scriptural studies could be proved against any brother, he should be exhorted to do the

one, study Scripture, and not to leave the other undone, not to neglect keeping informed on vital issues. To say "pscha" to the brethren who, for conscience' sake, inform themselves, testify, and in the course of events ask the Missourian Unity Committee informed and pointed questions, is not apostolic — but, alas, a sophomoric sneer.

We see again that in touching upon only one point, the ALC's real relation to the American Lutheran Conference, we are at once involved in the whole wider matter of Missouri's unfruitful unity negotiations with the American Lutheran Church, and the inadequate and often unlovely defense of these negotiations over against brethren within and without Missouri who are critical of them.

But we began to speak of the ALC's alleged leaving the American Lutheran Conference, or winning the same to the orthodoxy of Walther, Pieper, and Bente. The March 14, 1953, issue of the *Lutheran Standard* (ALC) in an article entitled "The Passing of the Jaundiced Eye" described the meeting of presidents, district presidents, and union committees of the ALC and Missouri in Chicago on February 9-11, 1953. At these, says the *Standard*, (p. 9) "Dr. Schuh made it crystal clear that our negotiations toward a merger within the American Lutheran Conference have priority, and we shall allow nothing to interfere with these negotiations." Thus passes a phantasy. The ALC is *not* leaving its former associations and fellowship. But the alleged "fact" that the ALC was leaving the American Lutheran Conference, plus large doses of dreadful silence, to be sure, have been a large part of Missourian defense for continued negotiations with that church body. Will Missouri's negotiations with the ALC — merged or unmerged — continue? Will there be "no retreat," and the, humanly speaking, then sure dissolving of the Synodical Conference? It would be better to break off those negotiations which have, in no small measure, contributed to the strained Synodical Conference relations, and to Missouri's own internal troubles, and then to devote wholehearted attention to the repairing of the breaches in the once goodly fellowship of the Synodical Conference, whatever plain discussions this would involve concerning Christian doctrine, historical facts, and the ensuing obligations of real Christian love.

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MOTTO: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding ought of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

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IN THIS ISSUE: Another Half Million Dollars to be Spent on Promotion of RSV — A Questionnaire on the Common Confession — Does the Common Confession Settle Doctrinal Differences? — Does the American Lutheran Church Confess That the Holy Scriptures are in All Their Parts and Words the Infallible Word of God?

● Another Half Million Dollars to be Spent on Promotion of RSV

It has been said that half a million dollars was spent on the initial promotion of the Revised Standard Version. Yet the campaign to replace the good old reliable King James or Authorized Version of Holy Scripture by this modernistic version of the Bible has not been succeeding too well. (Wm. R. McCulley, president of Thos. Nelson and Sons, was reported to have predicted: "The King James will be obsolete in a few years.") Dr. John C. Trever, Director of the Department of the English Bible of the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., for instance, has said, in a promotional article in the Inter-

national Journal of Religious Education, March, 1953: "Discussion of the new version, and especially of certain passages, is intense, sometimes heated. . . . Some may be confused, or even discouraged, about the wave of criticism that has swept the country since the appearance of the new version. Some churches have become sharply divided over the issue." (Yes, this Bible of Modernism is causing division and offense contrary to the doctrine which we have learned, Rom. 16, 17.) Dr. Trever speaks of "the furor over the RSV translation of Isaiah 7, 14." Dr. Carl McIntire, who is leading the holy war against the perversion of Scripture that confronts us in this Bible of Modernism, has (in the *Christian Beacon*, March 12, 1953) rightly emphasized the fact that "at last, an issue has

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come where the man in the Protestant hinter-
land, or in the grass roots, can see and feel
the effect of Modernism." "Without any
question," he says, "the issues raised over
the new Bible have stirred the Christian
people of America as they have not been
stirred in this country."

Thank God for the rejection which this
Bible of Modernism is experiencing. Opposi-
tion to it is unquestionably growing and
becoming ever more determined. However,
the fact that the NCCUSA is spending an-
other half million to counteract this opposi-
tion should prove an incentive to all true
Christians to redouble their efforts, under
God, in testifying against the modernistic
unbelief that lies imbedded in the RSV.

We may very well let the words of
Luther's immortal battle hymn of the Refor-

mation be our slogan in this Christian
campaign —

*The Word they still shall let remain,
And no one thank them for it!*

P. H. B.

❶ A Questionnaire on the Common Confession

Professor Siegbert Becker of River Forest
addressed a questionnaire to about fifty pro-
fessors and pastors of the American Luth-
eran Church, requesting them to state their
position on certain questions pertaining to
the *Common Confession*. Up to the time of
this writing letters have been received from
two Theological Seminary professors — one
from the Central States and the other from
the far West — and from eleven pastors
from the following state: California [1],
Kansas [1], Maryland [1], Michigan [2],
Minnesota [1], New York [1], Pennsylvania
[1], Wisconsin [2], and Washington [1].
Three returned the questionnaire unanswered
but briefly commented on the *Common Con-
fession* as such and on union with Missouri.

The Inspiration of Every Word and Part of Scripture

In its *Brief Statement* the Missouri Synod
confesses that the Holy Scriptures "are in all
their parts and words the infallible truth,
also in those parts which treat of historical
geographical, and other secular matters."
(Par. 1.)

Question 1: Assuming that we are speak-
ing of the original manuscript, do you per-
sonally believe that "all the words of the
Bible are the words of God"?

Eight answered the question affirmatively.
(One of these added the notation: "By
words I mean the reality conveyed by the
symbols [words] used.") Two answered
negatively. (One of these answered: "I do
not. To mention only two statements: Acts
17, 28; Titus 1, 12. Paul was inspired to
quote them, but they remained words of
Greek poets.")

Question 2: Would you be willing to add
such a statement to the article on the "Means
of Grace" in the *Common Confession*?

Seven answered in the affirmative. (One
of these added: "And I agree that the Word
of God in 'translations' is a means of grace.")
Three answered negatively. (One of these

answered: "Not necessarily." Another wrote: "I would simply eliminate all statements that include 'all the words.'")

Question 3: Do you believe that the Bible is infallible also in matters of geography, history, chronology, etc.?

Six answered affirmatively. Four answered negatively. (Of the latter one added: "Not in our English or German translation." Another wrote: "Yes or No does not effect my salvation." A third stated: "I would use neither 'fallible' nor 'infallible,' but simply say, it is not an authority in these matters.'")

Question 4: Would you be willing to add a statement to that affect to the *Common Confession*?

Six answered affirmatively. Four answered negatively. (One of these stated: "No, not in all cases. In general 'yes.' Etc. is extensive. The chronology is not a point in all books." Another added: "I do not see the need for a negative statement concerning the Bible.")

From the above it is clearly seen that not all pastors of the American Lutheran Church subscribe to the Scriptural teaching of the inspiration of *every word and part* of Scripture.

Objective Justification

In its *Brief Statement* the Missouri Synod confesses "that God has already declared the whole world to be righteous in Christ." (Par. 17.) In this matter the question at issue is whether God has in Christ once and for all forgiven the whole world its sins or whether God has merely secured and provided forgiveness for all men? If God has merely secured and provided forgiveness for all men, then faith becomes a *human performance*, in view of which, or on account of which, God justifies the sinner. Man must first believe and then God will impute Christ's righteousness to him and forgive him his sins.

Question 5: Do you believe that God has justified *all* men for Christ's sake?

Five answered affirmatively. (Three of these, however, qualified their answer. One said: "Provided faith is implied." Another added: "in one sense." A third wrote: "But only believers are accounted righteous.") Five answered negatively. One of these said: "No! All may be, but all are not. Is this a 'catch' question?" Another commented: "All who believe in Christ." A

third answered: "When I am shown that 'reconcile' and 'justify' are synonyms, I'll accept 'objective justification.'" A fourth added: "But only believers are accounted righteous." A fifth wrote: "Why this question? 'all' even underlined. Was there ever a doubt about this? True, I once heard that the Missourians had some argument about justification among themselves, but never heard that there was a difference between them and the A.L.C. people. So I don't know what you are driving at. This may be my answer: I believe that after Jesus Christ finished His work of atonement, the Father was ready to impute His righteousness to any believer, white or black, none excluded.")

Question 6: Would you be willing to add such a statement to the *Common Confession*?

Six answered affirmatively. Three answered negatively. (One of these stated: "I would not. Objective justification is too new. It is not a standard doctrine. 2 Cor. 5:19." Another added: "Why not? If you need it for Missourians.")

Question 7: Would you be willing to add the statement under "Justification" in the *Common Confession*, that "God has already forgiven the sins of all men"?

Three answered affirmatively. (One of these qualified his answer: "Yes, that He has paid for all sin." Another qualified: "Yes, if properly understood.") Seven answered negatively. (One of these: "No, 'He is not willing that any should perish,' etc. If *forgiven*, they are *saved*. 'He that believeth not,' etc." Another answered: "Christ's atonement is efficacious *for all*, but not effective *in all*." A third wrote: "Stay by the word, not theories!" A fourth added: "He that believeth not shall be damned. Unqualified statement would confuse the unlearned." A fifth stated: "Yes, that He has paid for all sins." A sixth said: "Not without baptism and faith in Christ." A seventh answered: "Not until you explain to me why you or some of your group suggest this addition. It would cause confusion. The 3rd Article speaks of 'forgives,' not 'forgave.'")

From the above it is clearly seen that not all pastors of the American Lutheran Church confess the Scriptural doctrine that God has in Christ absolved the whole world of its sins. Even where "objective justification" is spoken of, the expression is used in the sense of the *Common Confession* (Part 1, vi, 1) that "forgiveness of sin has been secured and provided for all men."

Election

In its *Brief Statement* the Missouri Synod defines Election: "that God, before the foundation of the world, from pure grace, because of the redemption of Christ, has chosen for His own a definite number of persons out of the corrupt mass and has determined to bring them, through Word and Sacrament, to faith and salvation." (Par. 39.)

Question 8: Do you believe that the election of God extends over a definite, limited number of men?

Five answered affirmatively. (One of these qualified his answer: "Yes, according to Bible: Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate, Rom. 8, 29." Another added: "Yes, over all believers." A third wrote: "Yes, but not arbitrarily.") Four answered in the negative. (One of these stated: "Not definite, but limited." Another added: "I do not. I do not believe in an 'en masse' election." A third said: "I believe God knows the number, but His knowing does not preclude the number." A fourth wrote: "God knows the exact number of those who will enter heaven. None more, none less. If you interpret your question in the spirit of Calvin, I say with all emphasis at my command that I am no Calvinist. And I add: nor a Crypto-Calvinist, i.e., I don't believe that God's 'sovereign will' or, as the Crypto-Calvinists modified it: 'the grace of God' elected or picked out a certain number of people who must and will be saved with the exclusion of all others. I am no Crypto-Calvinist, I am a Lutheran.")

Question 9: Would you subscribe to and be willing to add to the *Common Confession*, under "Election," this statement: "God has from eternity chosen a certain number of men and those whom He chose He decided to bring to faith"?

One answered affirmatively. Seven answered negatively. (One of these added: "Is this another 'catch' question? God foreknew and chose, or 'elected' those who would believe and be saved." Another answered: "What does 'certain' mean? A limited number? Then, no. God chose, but not *between* men. His foreknowledge took care of His choice. Why say more?" A third stated: "God in eternity foresaw which souls He could and which He could not succeed in bringing to persevering faith in Jesus Christ. God in eternity 'elected' those and only those, of whom He foresaw that He could succeed in bringing them to such faith." A fourth said:

"No, I would keep to Scripture, Whom He did foreknow, not 'chose.'" A sixth wrote: God has not arbitrarily chosen, but He knows." A seventh added: "This is pure Calvinistic heresy." Again he said: "Coming to questions 8 and 9: I was surprised that you did not have any question about the *intuitu fidei finalis* [in view of final faith]. They were absolutely necessary. I am bold enough to state that outside of Missouri a *very* high percentage of Lutheran teachers and preachers teach the *intuitus*. I was not only surprised, but shocked when I saw your questions concerning predestination. Did you take them from Calvin's *Institutes*? If I were permitted to draw any conclusions from your questions and hold all Missourians responsible for them, I would say the Missourians are really Crypto-Calvinists as we often accused them to be.")

This clearly shows that the old accusations of seventy-five years standing — of being Crypto-Calvinists — are still being hurled against the Missourians. In its *Brief Statement* the Missouri Synod expressly says: "Nor does Holy Scripture know of an election 'by foreseen faith,' 'in view of faith.'" (Par. 36.)

Conversion

Question 10: Do you believe that a person who has an earnest desire to be saved through Jesus is already converted?

Five answered affirmatively. (One of these added: "I do, since I believe that this desire was worked by the Holy Spirit. I find the answer to all these questions in the 2nd and 3rd Articles." Another stated: "If he believes Jesus is the Son of God." A third answered: "In some instances." A fourth wrote: "If his earnest desire leads him to want to be baptized, attend church, commune, study and hear God's Word, Yes. If not, No.") Five answered negatively. (One of these said: "The desire or wish to be saved does not save. Faith in Christ saves!" Another wrote: "A desire is not yet faith." A third added: "There is no such earnest desire before conversion. Man is opposing God till the Holy Spirit has turned his will.")

Question 11: Do you believe that conversion of man does not depend upon his lack of resistance or less resistance?

One answered this question: "Not a possible question." Two answered affirmatively. (One of these stated: "Conversion is 'in toto' the work of God. Resistance or lack of it, has nothing to do with conversion. Can he

resist as long as he is dead?") Seven answered negatively. (One of these stated: "Another 'catch' question. A man can resist unto death." Another said: "If he does not resist he will be converted." A third answered: "It is always risky to ask a question in a negative way. I answer in a positive way: Man resists till his conversion. That his resistance is less strong does not explain conversion.")

Question 12: Would you be willing to add a phrase under "Conversion" to the effect that "the fact that some are converted rather than others is not due to the fact that some resisted less than others?"

One commented: "Another impossible question." Another answered in the affirmative, but added: "While agreeing with the statement, I don't know why it should be added." Six answered negatively. (One of these wrote: "Grace can save whether resistance is less or great.")

This clearly shows that members of the A.L.C. are not willing to rule out man's "lack of resistance or less resistance" as a determining factor in man's conversion.

Creation in Six Days

Question 13: Do you believe and would you be willing to state in the *Common Confession* that the world was created in six ordinary days?

Three answered affirmatively. (One of these added: "I believe so, but it does not affect salvation.") Six answered negatively. (One of these wrote: "Why do that? My God is great enough to have done that, if He so pleased at His 'fiat.' Or He could have taken six days of 24 hours, or an era of time, I do not know." Another stated: "Certainly not. For me Genesis 1, 1 is enough. Day is an equivocal term everywhere." A third stated: "Yes, if the Hebrew *jom* which we translate as 'day' cannot mean period but *must* mean an ordinary day of 24 hours. To make peace between our church bodies dependent on your assumption in regard to *jom* and put it even in the *Common Confession* is absolutely out of the question." Here we would add that a Theological Seminary professor, one of the committee members responsible for the *Common Confession*, wrote: "The question whether *jom* in Genesis 1 means a day of 24 present hours, or whether the earth once revolved much more slowly, or it means six 'periods of creation' is an exegetical problem. God's

might is such that I personally hold it *could* have been either. But which it was we cannot bind dogmatically upon the consciences of men. Both views are held in the ALC.")

The Common Confession as Such

As to the *Common Confession* itself one pastor wrote: "I don't like the *Common Confession*. It says too much and not enough. There is too much philosophy, i.e., inductions and deductions. It is ambiguous, verbose, and too much of it is irrelevant. Compromise is written all over the *Common Confession*. What we need is a definition of 'doctrine.' We must learn to distinguish between the book called the Bible and the Word of God." Another pastor wrote: "The so-called Common Confession has never had my approval. From my first reading of it I failed to see how reputed theologians of our two synods could compose and indorse it with its various inexactnesses and its lack of conciseness. We are not used to that sort of 'confession' in our synods."

Union with Missouri

On the matter of fellowship with Missouri a theological professor wrote: "I think I know fairly well already what the doctrinal position of the men of the Missouri group is, a position which ranges from the ultra-orthodoxy in the Wisconsin Synod to a liberalism considerably beyond my own in some other quarters. These differences are not greatly disturbing to me. In shorter words, I am hoping that without too much 'heresy-hunting' we can unite our divide Lutheranism in this country on the basis of agreements in the faith which we know do exist." On this same matter a pastor wrote: "I have only the fervent wish that Lutheranism will, by the grace of God, evolve pure and undefiled out of all these peace conferences. Mo. and A.L.C. belong together and will get together some day. Yes, and then Mo. will get a better name! You are shocked. Okay. Do you know what your official name really means? Don't blame me — what I shall write now comes from St. Louis: Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod means Lutheran Church minus Missouri Synod."

The answers to the questionnaire are a sad jumble of knowledge of what God has revealed and ignorance of the same. They clearly reveal that the former leaders of the Missouri Synod were right about the position of A.L.C. theologians. They spoke the truth in this matter. The old doctrinal differences

still exist between the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church.

D.

● Does the Common Confession Settle Doctrinal Differences?

"The Common Confession Part I and II," which is to serve as a doctrinal agreement between the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church, has been submitted to all Missouri Synod pastors and will be acted on at the Houston convention. Does the *Common Confession*, as it is now written, clearly and unequivocally settle the doctrinal differences which have always existed between these two church bodies?

The Inspiration of Scripture

Does the *Common Confession* clearly and unequivocally confess as does our *Brief Statement* (Par. 1) that the Scriptures "are in all their parts and words the infallible truth, also in those parts which treat of historical, geographical, and other secular matters"?

The statement in Part 1, v, 2 of the *Common Confession* that the Holy Spirit by divine inspiration "supplied to the holy writers content and fitting word" — the same words are used in the A.L.C. *Declaration* and the *Pittsburgh Agreement* — was already in 1941 declared inadequate by Synod's Committee on Lutheran Union "because it contains loopholes for a denial of the verbal inspiration and inerrancy of the Scriptures." (Cf. *Proceedings*, 1941, p. 279.) The statement in Part 1, v, 2 that we acknowledge the Holy Scriptures "in their entirety" as the inspired Word of God does not necessarily imply the inspiration of *every part* and *word* of Scripture. According to dictionaries in common use, the word "entirety" has the meaning of "whole" and does not "necessarily imply parts." The statement in Part II, vi, 2 "God moved men to write what He wanted recorded in the words which He wanted employed" — originally found in the ALC *Yearbook*, 1951, p. 19 — leaves unanswered the questions: *How much* of Scripture did God want to be recorded? And, just what is meant by "wanted employed"?

Thus room is given for the *false* teaching, which denies that *every word* of Scripture is the inspired and inerrant Word of God and which merely holds that the Scriptures are the inspired Word of God in those parts

only which pertain more or less directly to man's salvation.

Objective Justification

Does the *Common Confession* clearly and unequivocally confess as does our *Brief Statement* (Par 17) that "God has already declared the whole world to be righteous in Christ?"

The statement in Part II, iii, 3 that "no one is excluded from the forgiveness spoken by God to the world in the death and resurrection of His Son Jesus Christ" may be understood in a twofold manner: either that the forgiveness has *been spoken* or that it *is being* spoken to the world. In the latter case it would say no more than that "the blessings of this ministry are meant for all races and conditions of men" (II, iii, 3), or, that "forgiveness of sin has been secured and provided for all men" and that "God offers this propitiation and reconciliation freely to men through the means of grace" (I, vi, 1).

Thus room is given for the *false* teaching, which denies that God has already in Christ absolved all the world of its sins and which merely holds that God has only secured and provided forgiveness of sins for all men.

Conversion

Does the *Common Confession* clearly and unequivocally reject as does our *Brief Statement* (Par 12) the false teaching that conversion is wrought "in part also by the cooperation of man himself, by man's right conduct, his right attitude, his right self-determination, his lesser guilt or less evil conduct as compared with others, his refraining from willful resistance, or anything else whereby man's conversion and salvation is taken out of the gracious hands of God and made to depend on what man does or leaves undone"?

The statement in Part II, i, 1 may be interpreted that *all unconverted* men willfully resist the gracious operation of God. But neither these words nor the words of Part I, vii, 1 rule out the false teaching still found in the A.L.C. to this day that the conferring of faith is in part due also to man's different conduct or attitude toward divine grace: by man's not adding to his natural resistance a so-called willful resistance (Cf. Reu, *Lutheran Dogmatics*, 1945 ed., p. 301ff), or, by man's using or not using the powers freely offered and imparted by the Holy Spirit to desist from willful resistance (Cf. *Lutheran Standard*, 1951, Oct. 27).

Thus room is given for the *false* teaching, which makes the un-Scriptural distinction between "natural" and "willful" resistance a determining factor in man's conversion.

Election

Does the *Common Confession* clearly and unequivocally confess as does our *Brief Statement* (Par. 39) the Scriptural doctrine of Election: "that God, before the foundation of the world, from pure grace, because of the redemption of Christ, has chosen for His own a definite number of persons out of the corrupt mass and has determined to bring them, through Word and Sacraments, to faith and salvation"?

The statements of Part I, iv, i and Part II, x, 1 rather agree with the definition of Election, found in the *Lutheran Standard*, 1951, Oct. 27: "Divine Election or Predestination is that act of God by which He chose for Himself, from eternity, all those in whom His saving grace would accomplish its blessed purpose."

Thus room is given for the *false* teaching, which holds that God's predestination accomplishes its purpose only in those who do not add to their natural resistance a so-called willful resistance, or, who by using the powers offered and imparted to them by the Holy Spirit desist from willful resistance. Room is also thus given for the *false* teaching which makes man's attitude in the conferring of faith a determining factor in God's election: God foresaw man's conduct or attitude toward divine grace and on the basis of such foreknowledge elected man to salvation.

The One Holy Christian Church

Does the *Common Confession* clearly and unequivocally confess as does our *Brief Statement* (Par. 25) that "the means of grace are not . . . a part of the Church; for the Church in the proper sense of the word consists only of *believers*"?

Man is brought to faith and preserved in the faith through the means of grace. However, it is *only through faith* that man is brought into fellowship with Christ (Acts 5: 4) and united in fellowship with all other believers (John 10:16). The *Common Confession* fails to point out that "the Christian Church consists not alone in fellowship of outward signs, but it consists especially in

inward communion of eternal blessings in the heart, as of the Holy Ghost, of faith, of the fear and love of God." (*Triglotta*, p. 227.) In its statement that "through the means of grace He calls all its members into fellowship with Himself and also unites the members in fellowship with one another" (I, ix, 1), the *Common Confession* lends support to the *false* teaching, which regards the fellowship of believers with Christ and with all other believers to some extent as something external and which contends that all those who use the means of grace are the Communion of Saints. (Cf. *The Church and the Social Gospel* by Dr. M. Reu, translated by Dr. O. C. Pannkoek, 1945, p. 43f.)

This *false* teaching receives further support in the enigmatic statement: "Either the Church is the one Church, or it is not the Church." (II, viii, 2.) The word "church" may in this connection refer either to the congregation of true believers (the invisible Church, the Communion of Saints) or to the company of those who use the means of grace (the so-called visible Church, which includes not only believers but also hypocrites). If used in the first sense, then this statement could be paraphrased: Either the congregation of true believers is the one congregation of true believers, or it is not the congregation of true believers. However, if the word "church" is used in the first instance in the sense of those who use the means of grace, then the statement could be paraphrased: Either the Church, that is, those who use the means of grace (the so-called visible Church, which includes not only believers but also hypocrites) is the one Church, the one congregation of true believers, the Communion of Saints, or it is not the Church. This harmonizes with the preceding sentence: "Either a man belongs to this one Church, or he does not." But in that case we have the old Iowan error (Cf. Reu, *Lutheran Dogmatics*, 1945 ed., p. 339), which holds that as soon as a person makes use of the means of grace — even before he comes to faith — he is a member of the one holy Christian Church, the Communion of Saints.

Thus room is given for the *false* teaching of the A.L.C. *Declaration*, which includes the use of the means of grace when defining the essence of the Church. The means of grace are no more part of the Church than the tools of the builder are a part of the structure which he is building.

The Last Things

Does the *Common Confession* clearly and unequivocally confess as does our *Brief Statement* (Par. 44) "Not to be included in the number of open questions are the following: the doctrine . . . of Chiliasm, and of Antichrist, these doctrines being clearly defined in Scripture"?

No one can deny that a future millennial reign of Christ (preceded by a general conversion of the Jews, a future personal Antichrist, and a resurrection of those suffering martyrdom under the Antichrist) is to this day being taught and tolerated in the A.L.C. (Cf. Reu, *Lutheran Dogmatics*, 1945 ed., p. 373ff.; *Wartburg Seminary Quarterly*, 1947, Sept.) The *Common Confession* merely states that the distinguishing features of the Antichrist are "still" discernible in the Roman papacy and that "we hold it to be an error to teach anything as a sign of Christ's second advent not promised or foretold in the Holy Scriptures, such as . . ." It does not say that the teaching of such typically chiliastic opinions is church-divisive error.

Thus room is given for the *false* teaching, which holds that differences in these matters are "open," that is, "non-church-divisive" questions and which declares that "it is neither necessary nor possible to agree in all non-fundamental doctrines."

In view of all this we cannot conscientiously subscribe to the *Common Confession* as our confession of faith. The *Common Confession* does not settle the doctrinal differences between the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church. On the contrary, it compromises the truth of God's Word and thus makes room for all manner of false, un-Scriptural teaching. It is causing division and offence contrary to the doctrine which we have learned from Holy Writ (Rom. 16: 17.) It has caused and is causing strife and discord within the Missouri Synod and within the Synodical Conference. Therefore we would in all humility and charity appeal to all who are promoting and advocating the adoption of the *Common Confession* to join us in declaring that we will grant the hand of Christian fellowship only to those who with us explicitly and unequivocally subscribe to the *Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod*. Then the members of the Missouri Synod and of the Synodical Conference may by the grace of God again be united in the faith and again

stand shoulder to shoulder in confessing the full truth of God's Word.

D.

❶ Does the American Lutheran Church Confess That the Holy Scriptures are in All Their Parts and Words the Infallible Word of God?

Correspondence of the Editor of the "Confessional Lutheran" with the Chairman of the Committee on Doctrinal Unity of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and of the Committee on Fellowship of the American Lutheran Church.

In order to establish a documentary record of the actual facts confronting us with regard to the question proposed in the heading of the present article, the editor of the *Confessional Lutheran* first of all addressed the following letter to the chairman of the Committee on Doctrinal Unity of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod:

Prof. Walter A. Baepler, Chairman Jan. 18, 1951
Committee on Doctrinal Unity of
The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod
1403 Concordia Court
Springfield, Ill.

Dear Professor Baepler:

Will you please secure for me at the earliest possible moment from the *American Lutheran Church's Committee on Intersynodical Fellowship* or from its chairman a statement giving the assurance that what is set forth under the heading "The Word" in Art. V of the COMMON CONFES-
SION is meant to be understood as Verbal Inspiration in the Scriptural sense in which this is confessed in the BRIEF STATEMENT OF THE DOCTRINAL POSITION OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH-MISSOURI SYNOD.

Thanking you for this courtesy, I remain
Very truly yours,

Paul H. Burgdorf

In reply to our request, the following three letters were received from the chairman of the Committee on Doctrinal Unity of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod:

The Rev. Paul H. Burgdorf Jan. 23, 1951
Clinton, Iowa

Dear Brother Burgdorf:

Your letter of January 18th at hand. I shall be very happy to try to obtain from the American Lutheran Church's Committee on Intersynodical

Fellowship or from its chairman the statement you desire. We have tentatively fixed February 12th as the date of our meeting with the men of the ALC. This will be our first personal contact with these people. I shall at that time endeavor to secure the statement you request.

Very sincerely yours,

Walter A. Baepler

The Rev. Paul H. Burgdorf February 16, 1951
Clinton, Iowa

Dear Brother Burgdorf:

As I wrote you in a previous letter we were supposed to meet the ALC group on Feb. 12. This meeting, however, has been postponed until April. Since I do not know the chairman of the ALC committee personally, I think it best to wait for your requested statement until I have made his acquaintance. I hope that this delay will not inconvenience you.

Sincerely yours,

Walter A. Baepler

The Rev. Paul H. Burgdorf May 22, 1951
Clinton, Iowa

Dear Brother Burgdorf:

At our recent meeting with the ALC Commissioners, it was stated very definitely by their spokesman that "content and fitting word" meant to them verbal inspiration. If you desire further information from their own lips, I would suggest you communicate with Dr. E. C. Fendt, Capital University, Columbus, Ohio.

Sincerely yours,

Walter A. Baepler

It will be noted —

- 1) That the chairman of the Committee on Doctrinal Unity of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod failed to keep his promise to secure for the editor of the "Confessional Lutheran" from the *American Lutheran Church's Committee on Intersynodical Fellowship* or from its chairman a statement such as had been requested.
- 2) That the chairman of the Committee on Doctrinal Unity of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod is evidently satisfied by the mere expression "verbal inspiration," ignoring the fact that modernists and unionists will, if need be, agree to the use of such a mere expression if only it can be made to serve their own purpose by the definition and limitations which they themselves place upon it. (Cp. "The Common Confession" Part II, Art. VI: "God moved men to write what He wanted

recorded in the words which He wanted employed.")

We had asked for the assurance that what is set forth under the heading "The Word" in Art. V of the COMMON CONFESSIO is meant to be understood as Verbal Inspiration in the *Scriptural sense in which this is confessed in the BRIEF STATEMENT OF THE DOCTRINAL POSITION OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH-MISSOURI SYNOD*. In this document Verbal Inspiration is confessed in the sense that the Holy Scriptures "are in all their parts and words the infallible truth, also in those parts which treat of historical, geographical, and other secular matters, John 10, 35." Such an assurance the chairman of the Committee on Doctrinal Unity of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod failed to supply. We therefore turned to the American Lutheran Church with the following request:

Prof. E. C. Fendt, D.D.
Capital University
Columbus, Ohio

Sept. 12, 1951

Dear Doctor Fendt:

Will you please advise me if what is set forth in the COMMON CONFESSIO, Art. V, under the heading "The Word" is meant to be understood by the American Lutheran Church as Verbal Inspiration in the sense in which this is professed in Par. 1-3 of the BRIEF STATEMENT OF THE DOCTRINAL POSITION OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH-MISSOURI SYNOD. If this should not be the case, will you please explain briefly but clearly just what differences exist in the confession of the two churches in this respect.

Believe me

Very gratefully yours,

Paul H. Burgdorf

In reply to this request the following two letters were received from the chairman of the Committee on Fellowship of the American Lutheran Church:

Rev. Paul H. Burgdorf
422 Main Avenue
Clinton, Iowa

Sept. 20, 1951

Dear Pastor Burgdorf

The Committee on Union and Fellowship of the American Lutheran Church will hold a meeting in Chicago on October 3rd. I am taking your note of September 12th along with me to the meeting of this Committee. Rather than give you only a personal opinion I prefer to give you the consensus of the nine members of our Committee.

Sincerely yours,

Edward C. Fendt

Rev. Paul H. Burgdorf
422 Main Avenue
Clinton, Iowa

Oct. 12, 1951

Dear Pastor Burgdorf:

The American Lutheran Church together with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod believes and teaches the Doctrine of Verbal Inspiration, i.e., "God moved the writers to write what He wanted to record in the words which He wanted employed." (American Lutheran Church's Year Book of 1951, Page, 19.)

Cordially yours,

Edward C. Fendt

The above reply of the American Lutheran Church's Committee on Fellowship since incorporated also in "THE COMMON CONFESSION" PART II, (submitted "as indicative of, and normative for, Christian life in our congregations" as over against the original Common Confession — now referred to by its authors as "Part I" — which was submitted as an expression of a "common Christian Faith") is as unsatisfactory and as apt to deceive as it can possibly be. It avoids giving a direct reply to either of the two simple requests made in the letter of the editor of the *Confessional Lutheran* and leaves unanswered the all-important question: How much of the Bible did God want recorded, and how many of its words did He want employed? Also: Just what do these expressions mean? In other words, How many of the words of the Holy Scripture are God's Word? We repeat, the issue is whether the American Lutheran Church is willing to confess Verbal Inspiration in the Scriptural sense in which this doctrine is confessed in the BRIEF STATEMENT OF THE DOCTRINAL POSITION OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH-MISSOURI SYNOD, which confesses Verbal Inspiration in the sense that the Holy Scriptures "are in all their parts and words the infallible truth, also in those parts which treat of historical, geographical, and other secular matters, John 10, 35."

The editor of the *Confessional Lutheran* next addressed the following letter to the chairman of the American Lutheran Church's Committee on Fellowship:

Rev. Edward C. Fendt, D.D.
Capital University
Columbus, Ohio

Oct. 25, 1951

Dear Doctor Fendt:

I wish to thank you for your letter of Oct. 12. At the same time I must state my regret over the fact that your committee did not see fit to answer

either of the two simple requests in my letter of Sept. 12, which would have made matters very clear. It is your privilege, of course, not to give such answer; on the other hand, I must not be faulted for regarding your committee as unwilling to do so.

Now, to clarify what you have written, will you please have your committee advise me whether the American Lutheran Church holds that God wanted the holy writers to record all of the Holy Scriptures, so that they contain no errors or contradictions, but are in all of their parts and words the inspired and infallible truth, for instance, also in such parts as treat of historical, geographical, and other secular matters; or whether the American Lutheran Church hesitates to confess that much.

Assuring you that I shall be very grateful for a reply from your committee to my request, I remain

Very truly yours,

Paul H. Burgdorf

As a result of the above letter the following correspondence ensued:

Rev. Paul H. Burgdorf
422 Main Avenue
Clinton, Iowa

October 30, 1951

Dear Pastor Burgdorf:

You may have to wait a long time for an official reply from our Committee on Union and Fellowship in the American Lutheran Church. I doubt if we shall have a meeting of our Fellowship Committee until February.

Sincerely yours,

Edward C. Fendt

Rev. Edward C. Fendt, D.D.
Capital University
Columbus, Ohio

Nov. 7, 1951

Dear Doctor Fendt:

I shall wait until you Fellowship Committee again meets and shall look for a reply to my letter of Oct. 25 at that time.

Very truly yours,

Paul H. Burgdorf

Rev. Edw. C. Fendt, D.D.
Capital University
Columbus, Ohio

Feb. 27, 1952

Dear Doctor Fendt:

May I kindly ask when I may look for a reply to my letter of Oct. 25.

Very truly yours,

Paul H. Burgdorf

Rev. Paul H. Burgdorf
422 Main Ave.
Clinton, Iowa

March 20, 1952

Dear Pastor Burgdorf:

On March 11 the Committee on Union and Fellowship of the American Lutheran Church had

a meeting in Chicago and authorized me to make this reply to your question of October 25: "The American Lutheran Church accepted the 'Brief Statement' in 1938 covering your question. This action has never been rescinded."

I am sorry you had to wait so long for a reply but our committee found it impossible to consider your question until last week.

Sincerely yours,

Edward C. Fendt

The above letter forces us to ask: Just how did the American Lutheran Church "accept" the *Brief Statement* "covering" the question at issue in the present correspondence? This question is answered in the American Lutheran Church's *Declaration of 1938*. This document contains, beside other things, an entire section setting forth the peculiar views of the American Lutheran Church concerning "Scripture and Inspiration," as a result of its deliberations concerning the doctrines that have been in controversy between us. Having made the reservations, which it insists on making with regard to this doctrine, the American Lutheran Church declared: "With the other points of" (what the American Lutheran Church regards as) "doctrine" (a matter which we are left to guess at — our emphasis) "presented in the *Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod* we are conscious of being in agreement." The *Declaration* then goes on to state furthermore: "We also believe that *in regard to the points touched upon in Sections I-IV*" (of the ALC *Declaration* — note this restriction Our Emphasis) "the doctrines" (that is, what the ALC regards as doctrines, a limitation the extent of which the ALC has never disclosed to us) "stated in the *Brief Statement* are correct. However, we were of the opinion that it would be well in part to *supplement* them in the manner stated above, in part also to *emphasize* those of its points which seemed essential to us." (From all of which one can only conclude that what is not so emphasized in the *Declaration* is not "essential" to the ALC in the doctrine of Holy Scripture. (Our emphasis.) Cp. *Missouri Synod Proceedings, 1938*, p. 221; 225f.

That our understanding of the situation confronting us is correct is shown by subsequent declarations of the American Lutheran Church itself, as witness: "We accept the corresponding points of doctrine in the *Brief Statement* as they are either 'supplemented' in our *Declaration* or 'emphasized

as to those points which seemed essential to us.' Thus the doctrine of the Holy Scripture has been supplemented in our *Declaration* with reference to the human factor. . . . Now and then something is considered as a 'point of doctrine' which hardly may be called thus." (Numerous examples of this were given in 1941; the actual extent of ALC exceptions thus safeguarded were still left to be guessed at.) Cp. *Missouri Synod Proceedings, 1941*, p. 281f.

This is the way "the American Lutheran Church accepted the 'Brief Statement' in 1938 covering our question."

It is also important to note the assurance of no one less than the chairman of the Committee on Union and Fellowship of the American Lutheran Church (authorized by the Committee itself), that: "This action has never been rescinded." In other words, the American Lutheran Church still stands where it stood in 1938 with regard to the doctrine of the Inspiration of Holy Scripture. Anyone making statements to the contrary is deceiving himself, and what he says is of such a nature as to deceive others also.

IN SHORT, AND IN FINE, WHOEVER WOULD CLAIM THAT IT IS A DOCTRINE OF THE AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH THAT THE HOLY SCRIPTURES "ARE IN ALL THEIR PARTS AND WORDS THE INFALLIBLE TRUTH" (ALSO IN THOSE PARTS WHICH TREAT OF HISTORICAL, GEOGRAPHICAL, AND OTHER SECULAR MATTERS), JOHN 10, 35, AND THAT THE AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH INTENDS TO CONFESS AS MUCH IN THE COMMON CONFSSION, — SUCH A ONE CLAIMS WHAT THE AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH ITSELF HAS NEVER CLAIMED, AND WHAT, WHEN SPECIFICALLY GIVEN AN OPPORTUNITY AND IMPORTUNED TO DO SO, ITS OFFICIAL COMMITTEE ON UNION AND FELLOWSHIP HAS STUDIOUSLY AND UNREMITTINGLY REFRAINED FROM DOING.

IT IS A GRIEVOUS ERROR TO BELIEVE, AND MUCH MORE STILL TO LEAD OTHERS TO BELIEVE, THAT "THE COMMON CONFSSION SHOWS THAT AGREEMENT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED IN THE DOCTRINES TREATED BY THE TWO COMMITTEES." AS STATED IN THE DIVISIVE RESOLUTION OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH-MISSOURI SYNOD AT ITS MILWAUKEE CONVENTION IN 1950. (PROCEEDINGS, p. 585.)

P. H. B.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Our office is being flooded with orders for the combined March-April and the May issue of the *Confessional Lutheran*, containing an extensive review of the REVISED STANDARD VERSION of the Bible. At present we are unable to fill these orders. Please, bear with us for a short time. Reprints of these issues have been ordered from the publisher. Meanwhile we shall continue to accept orders for mass distribution of the March-April (combined) and the May (single) issue of the *Confessional Lutheran* at the following rates, postpaid: Single copies — 25c, one dozen copies — \$2.50, one hundred copies — \$20.00.

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"GUARDING THE FLOCK"

One of the greatest calamities which has befallen the Church, next to the acceptance, in part or in full, of the build-up against the Scriptures manufactured out of the theories of would-be scientists and out of the hypothesis and assumption of professedly religious scholars with a view to discrediting the scientific and the historical character and accuracy of the Sacred Scriptures, is the tabooing of the controversial. One is not long in perceiving that it is only the attempted defense of the Scriptures which comes under this taboo and is so unpopular. The false and the middle-of-the-road position can be aired freely and can be considered matters in good taste.

The utter folly of steering clear of "the controversial" ought to be openly apparent, for this very policy has encouraged the enemy in plunging every possible issue into a state of uncertainty, perplexity, and confusion. What artifice on the part of the devil in raising up an element among religious teachers bent upon making everything pertaining to the Word controversial in order to make its defense offensive and at variance with etiquette and good taste and then to turn around and work on the minds of another element (claiming to be evangelical) who not only themselves shun but who frown upon all and any who dare to lift up the

standard of the Lord's provision to give battle! What hope has Truth to ever come to its own with a situation like this? And who is there that can truthfully deny that such a situation obtains?

That this situation is deplored is to be seen further in the following article from Keith L. Brooks' monthly periodical *Prophecy*, September, 1952, p. 24. I quote: "If evangelical Christianity is to stay alive under the twin threats of Catholicism and Communism," writes Oliver G. Wilson, "she must repudiate place-seekers and time-servers who dare not speak out against wrong. She must develop and train aggressive leaders who fear only sin and obey only God; who *expose every form of error* and courageously stand for truth under all circumstances.

O watch and fight and pray;
 The battle ne'er give o'er;
 Renew it boldly every day
 And strength divine implore.

In our day the tendency among ministers is to avoid controversial subjects. Contending for the Faith is construed to be only the proclamation of the Gospel truth. Few are tending the flock and guarding them against the wolves on every side. Too costly — they say."

However can we expect the Lord to have mercy upon a situation of this kind? Our gravest danger does not arise from Communists and Romanists in governmental positions, but from those who give error a free course by refusing to rise up in the exposure and in the denunciation of it.

The Slavic Evangel (C. L. Rumball, Edit.), January, 1953.

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MOTTO: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding ought of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

VOLUME XIV

AUGUST, 1953

NUMBER 8

IN THIS ISSUE: The Houston Convention of the Missouri Synod — Promoters of the RSV Parade Their Unbelief — How Deep is the RSV Sense of Responsibility to the Original Text of the Scriptures? — The New Bible — The Distinctive Doctrines of the Synodical Conference — "The Passing of the Jaundiced Eye" — A Minister's Most Arduous Task — The COMMON Confession — Review of Publications.

● The Houston Convention of the Missouri Synod

It is not our purpose to write a report of the 1953 convention of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Numerous such reports have come to the attention of our readers elsewhere. It is rather our intention to present a very brief evaluation of some of the more important aspects of the convention. Some of these will no doubt have to be treated in greater detail in future issues of our publication.

A Convention Which Would Not Face Issues

The Houston Convention, for one thing, must be characterized as a convention which would not really face issues in most important matters, more particularly in matters of doc-

trine, confession, and practice. "Everybody" knows that it was a buck-passing convention, is the way one brother expressed himself to us. A glance at many of its resolutions will bear out our statement.

Time and again, when someone rose to speak on matters of doctrine, the chairman would give him the floor with a dictatorial "Be brief!" And such impatience was soon reflected in delegates to the convention and — in its hurried "decisions."

The Revised Standard Version

Among the unsatisfactory resolutions of the Houston convention which perhaps unsettled more things than they settled, or at least left them thus, so far as real issues are concerned, was one concerning the new Bible of modernism known as the Revised Standard Version. To make matters worse,

present year, 1953, Synod, for instance, speaks of "the doctrine that the pope is the Antichrist." However, certain elements within the Missouri Synod are no longer satisfied with its century-old confession of Truth. And the Presidium and its Advisory Committee on Doctrine and Practice are yielding to the clamor against what Synod has been confessing. Compare for instance the Report of the Advisory Committee on Doctrine and Practice, of Aug. 15, 1951, on the Antichrist, and on such un-Scriptural dreams as those of a general conversion of the Jews, a physical resurrection of martyrs before the Judgment Day and a still future 1,000 years (Latin: Millennium) of some special significance for the church on earth. And so the question "What is a doctrine?" was left unanswered at this convention, as were so many other simple things with regard to which the Missouri Synod has had the right, Scriptural answer all these years. It was referred to the Committee on Doctrinal Unity and the faculties of our two theological seminaries for joint "study." (Resolution No. 22, Committee No. 3, Intersynodical and Doctrinal Matters.)

II Tim. 3, 7, "Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth," would be a good theme for Missouri today. Dr. F. Pieper has well said in his *Christian Dogmatics* (German Edition, Vol I, p. 255): "The Christian Church does not teach doubtful things, but the sure, divine truth." In Article VII of the Augsburg Confession, on the Church, the Lutheran Church has said the same thing: In the Church "the Gospel is rightly taught and the sacraments are rightly administered." Those are its marks. Anything to the contrary is the mark of sectarianism or of a schismatic communion. When a church which by infinite grace has had the eternal truth and enjoyed its confession for a hundred years begins to reduce doctrinal matters to mere questions because it is being urged to change its confessional position, then the time has come to consider most earnestly and seriously the hard fact that *thus passes the glory of a church.*

P. H. B.

● Promotors of the RSV Parade Their Unbelief

The revision of the English Bible known as the Revised Standard Version was initiated by the International Council of Religious Education. The work connected with it was begun in 1928 when the Council

acquired the copyright of the American Standard Version (which appeared in 1901) from its publishers, Thos. Nelson and Sons. In 1946 the ICRE published the New Testament of the RSV. In 1950 the ICRE merged with the Federal Council of Churches of Christ into the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., transferring its copyright to that body and becoming its Division of Christian Education. Subsequently, in 1952, the entire Bible of the RSV was published by the NCCUSA.

The Division of Christian Education of the NCCUSA continues to publish the *International Journal of Religious Education*, now in its 29th year. This journal publishes promotional articles on the RSV from time to time. Its March, 1953, issue contained an article on "Teaching with the RSV Bible" by John C. Trever. Dr. Trever, a Methodist clergyman, lent assistance to the RSV revision committee by making a detailed study of the terms used in the Bible as names of trees. He has since that time become Director of the Department of the English Bible of the Division of Christian Education of the NCCUSA. As such it is his business to promote this particular version as over against the King James or Authorized Version of Holy Scripture. In his endeavor to extol the RSV over the AV, in the article named, Dr. Trever cites Psalm 16, 10 as an example. We shall set the respective portions of these versions opposite each other, as Dr. Trever does. They compare as follows:

AV

"For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."

RSV

"For thou dost not give me up to Sheol, or let thy godly one see the pit."

And now we shall set opposite each other the testimony of the Holy Spirit through St. Luke in Acts 2, 25-31 (Peter's Sermon on Pentecost Day, again using the text of the RSV, and the contrary claims of Dr. Trever, as to the true reading of Psalm 16, 10:

Acts 2, 25-31 (RSV)

"For David says concerning him" (Jesus — cp. vv. 22-24) . . . "For thou wilt not abandon my soul to Hades, nor let thy Holy One see corruption . . . Brethren, I may say to you confidently of the patriarch David

that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would set one of his descendants upon his throne, he foresaw and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that he was not abandoned to Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption.'"

Cp. also Acts 13, 35-37.

Dr. Trever

"Usually KJV translates the Hebrew word *shahath* with 'pit,' but here they mis-translate it, though the parallelism clearly required the equivalent of 'Sheol.' The parallelism as well as the whole context should make the misleading 'Holy One' of KJV clear, for it refers to the Psalmist who feels he has followed the precepts of God."

Contrary to Dr. Trever, the AV has in Ps. 16, 10 properly rendered the Hebrew word *shahath* by the wholly correct translation "corruption," as shown by the quotation of this Old Testament passage in the New Testament, — even as translated in the RSV. The words "Sheol" and "Hades" (meaning no more than the abode of the dead to RSV scholars) should, of course, be translated hell, as they are in the AV. That the AV translation "Holy One," in Psalm 16, 10, meaning Christ, is correct is shown again by its being so rendered in the Greek New Testament quotation, — again as acknowledged even by the RSV translation of that quotation. But now, and above all, note that Dr. Trever says that Psalm 16, 10 refers to no more than *the Psalmist himself*. This is slapping the Apostles Peter and Paul, and Luke, who wrote the Acts of the Apostles, in the face as it were, not to mention the Holy Spirit Himself, who is the real author of Holy Scripture. And the whole rendering and understanding of Psalm 16, 10 as RSV promoters would have it — that God did not give David up to death or let Him see the "pit" — is a clear contradiction of all that Scripture teaches concerning this subject.

Such testimony of the Holy Spirit as exists in Acts 2 and 13 with reference to Psalm 16, 10 means nothing at all to Dr. Trever and other promoters of the RSV. Make no mistake about it, the "scholarship" of which these men boast that it has given us a better translation of the Bible than what we have in the Authorized Version is naked unbelief. And it is so unashamed in

its disobedience to the Word of God that it does not even attempt to cover its nakedness with fig leaves. The express testimony of the Holy Spirit in Mt. 1, 22f with reference to Isaiah 7, 14 is in the same way rudely brushed aside, Dr. Trever saying that this classic Messianic prophecy "has nothing to do with the doctrine of the virgin birth of Jesus;" that Isaiah is merely speaking of the name of the child of some young woman "to symbolize the necessity of faith in God to get through a difficult political situation that arose in 735 B.C." (Cp. report in Milwaukee, Wis. *Sentinel*, January 24, 1953, as cited in *Confessional Lutheran*, May, 1953.) Other passages of Holy Scripture are similarly dealt with.

Whom are you going to believe, — the Holy Spirit, who is the real author and interpreter of His own Word in Ps. 16, 10 and in Acts 2 and 13, and elsewhere, or such modern unbelieving scholarship as that for which men like Dr. Trever and the RSV stand, who set themselves above God's Word and deny what it expressly asserts?

P. H. B.

● How Deep is the RVS Sense of Responsibility to the Original Text of the Scriptures?

We have elsewhere characterized the importance of the *International Journal of Religious Education* in relation to the Revised Standard Version of Holy Scripture. In its February, 1953, issue the Journal contained an editorial on "The RSV Translation of Isaiah 7, 14," signed by Dr. Luther A. Weigle, who is the chairman of the RSV committee. (The article in defense of the RSV has also been disseminated as a release of the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA.) In this article Dr. Weigle falsely contends that Isaiah 7, 14 says one thing while Mt. 1, 23 says another thing; that there is a "difference" between these two parts of Holy Scripture. He contends that the Hebrew word *almah* used in Is. 7, 14 means "a young woman of marriageable age," and that "this word does not either assert or deny the virginity of the young woman." This is simply not true. To say, moreover, that the word which Isaiah used does not assert virginity is in direct contradiction to what the Holy Spirit in Mt. 1, 22-23 testifies to have been "spoken of the Lord

by the prophet." Dr. Weigle also makes the significant revelation that the footnote "Or *virgin*" under Isaiah 7, 14 in the RSV is intended to mean no more than "recognition of the fact that the Greek translation" (the Septuagint) "has *parthenos*," — which, however, according to Dr. Weigle and his RSV committee is not a correct translation of the Hebrew word used in Isaiah, since, according to Dr. Weigle, the Hebrew word *does not assert virginity*.

But we are now interested in another matter. Dr. Weigle says of his revision committee (the American Standard Bible Committee) whose work of revision lies before us in the RSV: "Our action was taken with a deep sense of responsibility to the original text of the Scriptures." He also says, rightly, that in Matthew the word at 1, 23 is "*parthenos*," which is the Greek word for "*virgin*." Now in view of these statements, within the whole setting in which they occur, it becomes most significant to note that while the Greek word *parthenos*, "which is the Greek word for *virgin*," occurs fourteen times in the New Testament, it has in only three of these instances been translated "*virgin*" in the RSV. In the other eleven instances in which the word occurs it has been rendered differently. We shall here list all of the fourteen instances in which the word occurs, with the respective RSV translation.

Only in Mt. 1, 23 and in Lk. 1, 27, where the text speaks of the Virgin Mary, and in Lk. 2, 36, where the corresponding word has been retained for the "*virginity*" of Anna the Prophetess, do we find the word "*virgin*" retained in the New Testament of the RSV.

In Mt. 25, 1. 7. 11 the Parable of the Ten Virgins becomes a Parable of Ten "*Maidens*" in the RSV.

In Acts 21, 9 the four daughters of Philip the Evangelist, who according to the Greek were *parthenoi*, "which is the Greek word for *virgins*," in the RSV become merely "*unmarried*."

The virgins of whom St. Paul speaks in I Cor. 7, 25 in the RSV again become merely the "*unmarried*." In verses 28 and 34 the same kind of virgin becomes simply a "*girl*."

In verses 36 and 37 she becomes a "*betrothed*."

In II Cor. 11, 2, where St. Paul says that he espoused members of the church at Corinth to one husband that he might present them as a chaste virgin to Christ, the RSV has rendered the word "*bride*."

In Rev. 14, 4, where the "144,000" (the Church Universal in glory) are portrayed as such as had (spiritually) not defiled themselves with women, "for they are *virgins*," the word "*chaste*" is used in the RSV.

All this leads us to ask: Has the chairman of the RSV committee in saying that *parthenos* "is the Greek word for *virgin*" allowed himself a mental reservation?

In view of the above another observation forces itself upon us. The possibility of changes in a conjectural future edition of the RSV has been appealed to in extenuation of acceptance of this version despite whatever errors it may harbor. This is wishful thinking, not realism. We must deal with the version which is before us and with the facts behind it. The appeal referred to can for the present be taken only as an admission of the objectionableness of existing translations in the RSV. However, in the event of such a conjectural future edition of the RSV as we are asked to consider, we ask, what in view of all the above should prevent the RSV promoters from making the Hebrew of Isaiah and the Greek (in the Septuagint as well as in the New Testament) correspond by translating the word *parthenos* also in Mt. 1, 23 and in Lk. 1, 27 "*maiden*" or "*unmarried*" or "*girl*" or "*betrothed*" or "*bride*" or simply "*chaste*"? Modernistic scholarship is "*progressive*." It constantly advances its negative assertions and claims farther and farther. Why should it be expected to deny its very nature and to act contrarily in this particular case, where retention of "*young woman*" for "*virgin*" means so much to it? ("*Virgin*" was completely eliminated from the New Testament versions of Moffatt and of Goodspeed, which appeared respectively in 1922 and 1923. Both of these men were members of the RSV committee, not to mention three of the four other men who translated the Goodspeed Bible, known as "An American Translation.")

Meanwhile we are left to ponder the question, Just how deep is the sense of responsibility of Dr. Weigle and his RSV associates to the original text of the Scriptures?

P. H. B.

❁ The New Bible

Modernistic clergymen are delighted with the new revision of the Bible, for it makes the Prophets and Apostles speak the language of the Higher Critics. Conservative men dislike it. James MacGinlay, one of New York's leading Fundamentalists, has warned against it in his Sunday afternoon radio hour and in a series of sermons in his downtown Baptist church in Brooklyn. Southern Baptists are up in arms. In two or three places the new revision has literally been burned by the public hangman. Much has been said about the way in which the proof-texts pertaining to the Virgin Birth and our Lord's deity have been translated.

The Modernists have spoken much nonsense in regard to obsolete words in the Authorized Version, and if asked for specific cases, they are sure to mention "prevent" and "wist ye not." The same men will read J. M. Barrie's admirable stories and when he makes men say that they never wist, or dinna understand, or hinna heard, or wusna there, the Modernists declare that it is delightful. If the Lord says "wist ye not" they profess to be offended, and make a great matter of it. It is not the obsolete words that the Modernists dislike. It is the words that refer in explicit terms to certain great doctrines that are distasteful to the crypto-Rationalist. The unusual words in the Authorized Version are very few. A person of average intelligence can master them all in ten minutes. They do it with strange words pertaining to their radios and television, so why not do likewise with the inspired Scriptures?

Rev. F. R. Webber, in *The Church Builder*, January, 1953.

❁ The Distinctive Doctrines of the Synodical Conference

The Universal Church and Particular Churches

The Scriptures not only speak of the one Church (Mt. 16, 18; Eph. 1, 22, 23), but frequently mention *Churches* in the plural, e.g. the Churches of Asia, I Cor. 16, 19; the Churches of Macedonia, II Cor. 8, 1; the Church of God which is at Corinth, I Cor. 1, 2; the Church which was at Jerusalem, Acts 8, 1; "tell it unto the Church," Mt. 18, 17. It is, therefore, in accordance with Scripture that we speak of *local* or *particular* Churches. But the relation existing between

the particular churches and the *una sancta* (universal Church) ought to be rightly understood. Men cannot, like God, look into the hearts, nor should they try to do so. We, therefore, have to consider all such to belong to the particular Church as unite with us in the profession of faith and do not contradict this profession by an ungodly life. It is in this regard that the particular Churches are called *visible* Churches. But we do not on this account set up *two* Churches. For the *visible* particular Church is a *Church*, and is called a Church and has the privileges of a Church ("the power of the keys") only on account of the true believers that are within it. The particular (i.e., local) Churches, therefore, properly speaking, consist of true believers only, the hypocrites being *intermingled* with the Church through external fellowship solely, forming no part of the particular Church itself. This is evident from all those passages of Scripture in which the *particular* Churches are described as the "Churches of God," consisting of those "that are sanctified in Christ Jesus" (I Cor. 1, 2; Rom. 1, 7). Hence it is, that a description of an Evangelical Lutheran local Church ("Ortsgemeinde") is given in the following words by Dr. Walther: "An Evangelical Lutheran local Church is an assembly of believing Christians in a certain place to whom the Word of God is preached in its purity, and the holy Sacraments are administered according to the Gospel." The relation between the particular Churches and the one universal Church may, therefore, be stated: the aggregate of the particular Churches (with the addition of those single believers who are cut off from all external Church-fellowship) is the one universal Church, embracing all true believers in all parts of the world.

Orthodox and Heterodox Churches

The particular Churches are of *two kinds*, determined by their relation to the Word of God. It is Christ's order and precept that the pure doctrine, and nothing but the pure doctrine, should be preached and heard in the Church. Throughout the whole Scriptures there is not found a single passage which authorizes or permits a minister to teach false doctrine, or a Christian to unite with those who teach false doctrine. Hence arises the difference between orthodox and heterodox Churches! A Church which conforms to the command of Christ, that is, a Church in which the Gospel is taught in its

purity and the Sacraments are administered according to the Gospel, is by right called an orthodox Church; on the other hand, a Church which does not conform to the will of Christ, but allows false doctrine to be taught in its midst, is justly called a heterodox Church. As ours is an age of indifference to doctrine, Christians must take special heed that the difference between orthodox and heterodox Churches be not obliterated. And it should be distinctly understood that the character of the Churches as to their orthodoxy, is determined by the doctrine which is *actually taught*, not by the "officially acknowledged confession" kept perhaps in the archives only; for Christ commanded all the articles of the Christian faith to be taught, and not kept on record only.

The heterodox Churches are called both "Churches" and "sects" in diverse respects. They are called Churches in so far as, besides erroneous doctrines, essential parts of the saving truth are retained, and, consequently, true children of God may be born and are found among them; they are called *sects* in so far as they profess doctrines contrary to the Scriptures, and, by adhering to false doctrine, have caused division in the Church, and constantly imperil the faith and salvation of the children of God.

What Position Christians Ought to Maintain Toward the Existing Heterodox Churches

As no person is licensed to speak aught but the Word of God in the Church (I Pet. 4, 11), and no Christian is allowed to unite with a teacher who in any way deviates from the doctrine revealed in Holy Scripture, Christians who are not yet connected with heterodox Churches, should *avoid* them, and Christians already united with them, should *come out* from among them. It is not according to the *good pleasure* of God — as modern theologians teach — that sects exist, for all Christians are required to agree on all articles of faith revealed in Holy Scripture (I Cor. 1, 10; Eph. 4, 3-6), but sects arose and exist by God's *forbearance* only, like other sins. Sects arise and continue, not for the purpose that Christians should *join* them, but for the purpose that Christians should prove their allegiance to God by *avoiding* them, as the Scriptures explicitly teach, I Cor. 11, 19: "There must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you."

To unite with heterodox Churches, must not be *excused* by pointing to the fact that

many dear children of God are found among them. As it was not lawful for the Israelites to join with Absalom, although two hundred men out of the Jerusalem went with the rebel "in their simplicity" (II Sam. 15, 11), even so it is not lawful for Christians to unite with those ecclesiastical communities that rebel against Christ by proclaiming false doctrines, although many Christians "in their simplicity" and by mistake have joined them. . . .

Pulpit-Fellowship

All Christians are commanded to *avoid* those who teach doctrines contrary to the Scriptures (Romans 16, 17); teachers, therefore, who in any way proclaim false doctrines, are not to be *admitted* into, but to be *excluded* from our pulpits. As this rule is taken from the Word of God, it admits of no exception, but applies to every case and occasion. The practice of pulpit-fellowship with errorists cannot be excused on the plea of its being demanded by *love*. For it is contrary to both the love toward God who bids us "*avoid*" false teachers and not to *invite* them into our pulpits, and the love toward our fellow-men, as it is our Christian duty to warn them against error, and not to confirm them in it. Moreover, it is patent that by the practice of "exchanging pulpits" the dissensions in the Church, caused by false teachers, are not removed, but continued and ratified.

Altar-Fellowship

In regard to altar-fellowship the same reasons hold good which forbid Church-fellowship with errorists. Altar-fellowship certainly is Church-fellowship. There is, however, an additional reason to be noted on this point. According to the explicit statement of Holy Scripture all such as are not able to "discern the Lord's body," partake unworthily of the Lord's Supper. Consequently, love bars us from admitting to our altars Christians who do not believe the real and substantial presence of the body and blood of Christ in the Holy Supper, and, therefore, are not able to discern the body of the Lord. This rule too, being taken from the Word of God, admits of no exceptions. To say that making exceptions should be left to the discretion of the individual pastor or congregation, is, in fact, granting a license to act against the Word of God. Suspension of altar-fellowship is not to be called excommunication. The Lutheran Church denied

altar and pulpit-fellowship to the Reformed, without denying that there are Christians among the Reformed. . . .

The right of judging on questions of doctrine does not rest with the Church at large only, nor with Synods only representing the Church of a certain country, nor with the clergy alone, but *with all individual Christians*, since upon all Christians is laid the duty of distinguishing pure teachers from deceivers, and of departing from error, Mt. 7, 15; Rom. 16, 17. To take away from Christians the right of judging on questions of doctrine, is an abominable outrage, and the origin of popery. . . .

What is true concerning ministers, holds good also in regard to the so-called representative Church, namely, in regard to Synods, Church Councils, etc. If the decisions and injunctions of the "Church" are identical with the Word of God, they are to be obeyed, not because they are the decisions of the *Church*, but on account of their being the very Word of God. If they go beyond these limits, either by declaring to be true what the Scriptures pronounce to be false, or by making obligatory upon the consciences of Christians what is a matter of indifference, all Christians are bound to disregard them. There is absolutely no authority in the Church beyond the Word of God, and there is, consequently, no authority on earth that could make the least thing, not prescribed by Christ, obligatory upon a Christian's conscience. . . .

Synods must not claim divine authority over the congregations connected with them, but carefully keep within the sphere of advisory bodies. The local congregation is the highest divinely instituted tribunal in the Church, as is seen from Mt. 18, 17. All jurisdiction exercised over congregations by persons outside of the congregations is of human ordinance only.

The Distinctive Doctrines and Usages of the General Bodies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States — The Synodical Conference, by Rev. Prof. F. Pieper, 1893, pp. 124-136.

❁ "The Passing of the Jaundiced Eye"

That is the heading of the editorial to be found in the *Lutheran Standard* of March 14. The *Standard* is the official English organ of the American Lutheran Church. The editor is reporting on the "recent meeting of top leaders of the Lutheran Church-

Missouri Synod and our own American Lutheran Church," and as one of the most cheering signs on the unity horizon is what he chooses to call "*the passing of the jaundiced eye*." If the eye be jaundiced it means that it is diseased through such evils as prejudice, envy, jealousy and the like. It has no longer a healthy view of things. And since the editor is convinced that pride, prejudice and personalities have played a larger part in keeping Lutherans apart than have matters of doctrine, it is not to be wondered at that he speaks of the clearing up of this unhealthy condition as a most cheering sign. If it be true, as the editor asserts, that they all too often have proceeded on the wrong assumption that the more things they are against, the more Lutheran they must necessarily be, then it must indeed be cheering to discover the right attitude: That there are many things they no longer have to be against. No sane person would want to suffer from jaundice of the eyes in spiritual matters.

But before we congratulate ourselves on the many things we no longer have to be against, let us make certain that our newly-found freedom has not been purchased at too high a price. There is such a thing as paying too much for the whistle. If it be something which God Himself has told us to be against, to *beware* of, to *avoid*, to *reject*, there is but one course for a true child of God to follow, and that is to obey. King Saul no doubt imagined that he was going to show God special honors with that elaborate sacrifice he was arranging at Gilgal. But God would have none of it. And why not? The sacrificial lambs had been bought at too high a price — *disobedience to God*. And it will remain true so long as smoke continues to rise heavenward from sacrificial altars: "To obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams," I Sam. 15, 22.

If I discover that what I have been told about other Lutherans is *not* true, then I will most certainly want to have the *truth* told me. I don't want to think or say anything about the ALC which is contrary to fact. And why not? Because God has told me in His never-failing word: "We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth." 2 Cor. 13, 8. But will the *Standard* editor accuse me of suffering from jaundice of the eyes when I get my information about the ALC from the columns of its own official organ? To be more specific:

As a member of our synod's Union Committee I have been taking part in scores of colloquiums with members of like committees from the constituent synods of our Synodical Conference ever since 1938, when we began considering the union negotiations between our sister synod of Missouri and the ALC. It was of course stipulated by Missouri in those negotiations that there could be no thought of fellowship with the ALC unless this church body could bring over to a more conservative position the other members of the American Lutheran Conference, a federation to which the ALC *did* and still *does* belong. But what have we experienced in the meantime? We have been told officially by the ALC that it is neither necessary nor possible to agree on all matters of doctrine. Then we were told by the ALC that "there is an area where there exists an allowable and wholesome latitude of theological opinion on the basis of the teaching of the Word of God." The latest pronouncement from the ALC on this moot question (and that comes in the very editorial we are considering) is this: "President Schuh made it crystal clear that our negotiations toward a merger within the American Lutheran Conference have priority, and we shall allow nothing to interfere with these negotiations." And in this same editorial we are also given to understand that the ALC has no intention of leaving the National Lutheran Council, the Lutheran World Federation, or the World Council of Churches for the sake of a closer alignment with the Missouri Synod.

It is within the course of the past year that we were told in the columns of the *Standard* that the reason for some being converted and others not is this: Some show the Holy Ghost only a *natural* resistance, while the others offer *willful* resistance. And so the *Standard* in its review of Dr. F. Pieper's *Christian Dogmatics II* faults him for speaking of God's *almighty* power in the act of conversion. It brings him pretty close to Calvinism, the review informs us.

And as recently as Feb. 21, 1953, we are taught in the *Lutheran Standard* that it was due to the limited morality of Old Testament believers, due to David's lack of knowledge and proper motivation (which means that he didn't pray in the right spirit) that he could pray the imprecatory Psalms. We are told that it was in the Old Testament time that sin was often identified with the sinner committing it, but not so in the New Testa-

ment times. Then a sharp distinction is made between sin and the sinner. But let me ask the editor: Was it *sin* or the *sinner* Paul cursed with these words: "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Marantha"? I Cor. 16, 22. May God give us grace to be against everything which He is against, even though we be accused of having a jaundiced eye.

Norman A. Madson in *Lutheran Sentinel*, April 12, 1953.

⊗ A Minister's Most Arduous Task

Manifold are the difficult and arduous tasks of a minister of Jesus Christ; but the most difficult and arduous of all, beyond question, is the task of proclaiming the pure doctrine of the Gospel of Christ and at the same time exposing, refuting, and rejecting teachings that are contrary to the Gospel. The minister who does this will discover by practical experience the truth of the old saying: *Veritas odium parit* (telling the truth makes enemies).

If faithful Athanasius in his day had been content to proclaim his doctrine that Jesus Christ is true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary; if he had not at the same time vigorously attacked Arius and the Arians, who denied this doctrine, he would undoubtedly have finished his life in honor and pleasant peace, for he was a highly gifted man. Had Luther followed the example of Staupitz of quietly teaching the pure Gospel to his brother monks without at the same time attacking the abominations of the Papacy with great earnestness, not a finger would have been raised against him. For even before Luther's day there had been monks who had come to understand the Gospel and made no secret of their knowledge; but they did not come out in public to fight against the errors of the Papacy. Accordingly they were allowed to live in peace and quiet as long as they held to the cardinal point in the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church — the Pope.

Worldly men and all false Christians cannot but attack those who teach a faith and doctrine different from theirs and to regard them as disturbers of the peace, as peace-hating, quarrelsome, and malicious men. These unfortunate people have no idea of the blindness which enshrouds them; they do not know how gladly the boldest champions of Christ would have kept peace with

all men, how much they would have preferred to keep silent, how hard it was for their flesh and blood to come out in public and become targets for the hatred, enmity, vilification, scorn, and persecution of men. However, they could not but confess the truth and at the same time oppose error. Their conscience constrained them to do this because such conduct was required of them by the Word of God.

They remembered that Jesus Christ had said to His disciples, not only: "Ye are the light of the world," but also: "Ye are the salt of the earth;" that is, you are not only to proclaim the truth, but you are also to salt the world with its sins and errors; you are to sprinkle sharp salt on the world to stay its corruption. They remembered that Christ had distinctly said: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword." Mt. 10, 34. Not as though the Lord took pleasure in peace-destroying wars; not as though He had come into the world to start dissensions and discord among men; but He means to say: "My doctrine is of such a nature that, if it is properly proclaimed, thetically and antithetically, peace among men cannot possibly be preserved. For as soon as My Word is proclaimed, men will divide into two camps: some will receive it with joy, others will be offended by it and will begin to hate and to persecute those who receive it."

Moreover, preachers of the right character remember that the Church is not a kingdom that can be built up in peace; for it is located within the domain of the devil, who is the prince of this world. Accordingly, the Church has no choice but to be at war. It is *ecclesia militans*, the Church Militant, and will remain such until the blessed end. Wherever a Church is seen to be, not *ecclesia militans*, but *ecclesia quiescence*, a Church at ease, that — you may rely on it! — is a false Church.

Moreover, an honest preacher knows that he is also a pastor, i.e., a shepherd. Of what use, however, is a shepherd who leads the sheep to good pasture-grounds, but flees when he sees the wolf coming? The occasion that is to test his caliber is when he must go to meet the wolf that wants to devour the sheep. That means to fight for the kingdom of God.

Lastly, an honest preacher knows that he is to be a regular sower of seed. Of what use is it to him to sow good seed and then to look on while another sows the tares of

false doctrine among his wheat? Soon the tares will outstrip the wheat and choke it.

Keep these facts stored up in your memory, my dear friends. If you wish to be faithful ministers of Christ, you cannot possibly become such without striving and fighting against false doctrines, a false gospel, and false belief. In the view of worldly men your lot will not be particularly enviable. Even wise Sirach says: "If thou comest to serve the Lord, prepare thy soul for temptation." He means to say: It is impossible for you to escape affliction if you wish to be a faithful servant of God. Any one who is without affliction may be ever so zealous in the discharge of the duties of his office, his zeal is nevertheless not of the right sort. Where there is genuine zeal, there not only planting, not only building, is going on, but the workmen also have the sword girded about them and are going out to wage the wars of the Lord. Let this be your slogan: —

Here men's scorn and frown,
Yonder glory's crown;
Here I'm hoping and believing,
There I'm having and perceiving;
For we reach our crown
Through men's scorn and frown.

Let this slogan be at the same time your comfort. For, as I have said, your cause will be spurned as an evil one, unless you connive at any contrary view that may be expressed in opposition to your teaching. But your cause will shine with all the greater luster in heaven. On the Last Day, God will say to you: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant! Thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." Mt. 25, 21. Then will come the times of your refreshing, when you will have quit this wicked world and the association of false Christians, who have shamefully vilified your best efforts, calling them the worst abominations. Then your Lord Jesus will say to you: "Well done! You were right; you did not look for ease and comfort; you only strove faithfully to keep what was entrusted to you."

But remember in this connection that errors are the more harmful the more they are concealed. It is therefore necessary that they be dragged into the light and fought.

Dr. C. F. W. Walther, *The Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel*. Tr. by W. H. T. Dau. Pp. 265-268.

● The COMMON Confession

The theses which the joint committee of the Synodical Conference and the American Lutheran Church have worked out have been submitted to the clergy, probably for final approval. We wonder about part II, but we do not dare to express any opinion as to why this part was necessary. Will the pastors in days to come be under obligation to pledge adherence not only to the Lutheran Confessions and their interpretation as laid down in Part I, but also the declarations in Part II? However, we do not question the wisdom of the committee which deemed part II necessary. No, we rather wish to congratulate the committee.

Indeed, it formulated a *common* confession. Common not only, as they hope, for the militant Lutherans, but for all the Protestant churches. Take the thesis about election, or, as many of us prefer to say, predestination. This doctrine was a bone of contention even in the 16th century and again during the last century, and it has caused a split in the Lutheran Church of America. But here we have now a thesis in which all Protestants — Calvinists, Cryptocalvinists, and *intuiti fidei* theologians—can join hearts and minds and be happy. Of course, convinced Lutherans should not read the 11th Article of the Formula of Concord anymore, because their discriminating orthodox eye discovers at once that the Common Confession is far from expressing the Lutheran doctrine.

The biblical doctrine of election or predestination as laid down in the 11th Article teaches, concerning the salvation of the individual Christian, that God in His grace for Christ's sake, and not for any imaginable reason in man himself before or in or after his conversion, has taken man unto His loving heart even in eternity, prepared the way of salvation for him in Christ Jesus, and has brought him to faith in the well-ordered way of the Gospel. It further teaches that God will perfect what He has begun in eternity, maintained up to date, and will bring the believing Christian to life eternal.

The loving concern of the committee for the Calvinistic Protestants becomes evident right at the beginning: it assigned to the thesis about election a place under IV. Hence the Calvinist, to whom predestination is the basic doctrine, begins with this doctrine, while the Lutheran brings it in at the end after he has spoken of justification, conver-

sion, means of grace, etc. The Calvinist and his half-brother, the Crypto-Calvinist, will feel at home at once when he reads this "Lutheran" Confession, but the Lutheran who does not wish to renounce his Lutheran heritage mourns.

Karl Ermisch.

(Ed. Note: The Rev. Karl Ermisch, Ph. D., S. T. D., Minneapolis, Minn., is a member of the American Lutheran Church. We felt that his sentiments about the Common Confession, circulated in a mimeographed paper, would be of interest to our readers. It is herewith brought without comment.)

● Review of Publications

Things Above. By F. E. Pasche. 343 pages. 5¾x8¼ in. Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. \$3.00.

There is no want of new devotional books and booklets in our day. Some of these are good, some not so good. Among the present generation of pastors there are many who no longer exhibit the thorough knowledge of the whole sum of Christian doctrine which characterized an older generation. Some authors even seem to think that in our day and age it is necessary to be on one's guard lest one be suspected of being "old-fashioned," and they show this attitude by a somewhat stilted and mannered language which is meant to be up-to-date but which lacks the fervor and warmth that distinguished the old Lutheran literature.

The book before us is written in simple, plain, and direct language. The author is a retired pastor of the Missouri Synod. His words appeal to the heart, as those of an experienced pilgrim who has tasted the good Word of God and the powers of the world to come, who realizes that he is near the goal, and who now wishes to communicate out of his treasure to his fellow-Christians, in order that they may also taste and see that the Lord is good and that they may be abundantly satisfied with the rich treasures of His house.

The specific feature of this book consists in this, that it treats all the various comforting truths and doctrines of the Bible to which it refers with a view to the final goal to which they all lead: heaven. Each one of the 84 brief meditations leads our thoughts heavenward and lets the heavenly glory, as compared with earthly things, appear to us as the one thing which is really worth striving for.

A superficial reader, finding that one and the same thought and the same text are occasionally repeated, may be inclined to criticize this as monotonous. But a careful reader will observe that these cases are by no means vain repetitions, but that a certain truth or a certain text, seen from a different angle, or found in a different connection, appear in a new light and thus still add to our joy. To mention only one instance, the Scripture text Ps. 17, 15 is found as the heading of the devotion on page 92 and again on page 113, but not for the same purpose. On p. 92 it directs our attention to the truth that the divine image in man which was lost through sin and which is only in part renewed in the believer is *completely and fully restored* in heaven, and it shows what a delight it will be for us to awake from our grave with the divine likeness completely restored in us. On p. 113 the same text is rightly used again in order to show that the highest bliss and happiness in heaven will consist in *seeing God as He is*.

Quotations from Luther and other sources serve to enhance the presentation of the subject matter. Occasionally a short prayer or a doxology is added to a devotion. But each devotion ends with a hymn verse, or more than one. The print is very readable.

Old and young Christians will find in this book a daily reminder which will, in the turmoil of modern living, employ the rich treasures hidden in the Word of God toward directing their thoughts and minds to our final goal, — eternal life with Christ in heaven. We gladly recommend this book and hope that many Christians will avail themselves of this opportunity to have their earthly life enriched by this food from heaven.

J. B.

* * * *

A History of Preaching in Britain and America. In Three Volumes. By F. R. Webber. Vol. I. 758 pages, 6x9 inches, cloth bound, with attractive jacket. Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Price: \$5.00.

This is the first in a series of three volumes discussing the history of Christian preaching in the British Isles and in America, much of which has never before been adequately told. In the present volume the

author tells the story of preaching south of the Tweed from the time of the original Celtic preachers to the present day. His extensive chapters on the trends and movements of the theological scene provide invaluable background for the fascinating biographies of the many eminent men of the pulpit whom he presents.

The history of the Celtic Church has scarcely ever received the recognition which is its due, but Mr. Webber, with his command of Gaelic has been able in large measure to sift truth from legend and thus to present a revealing picture of the great influence of that church in the early centuries of the Christian era in his treatment of the preaching and preachers of the Celts in the days before Augustine landed at Thanet off the coast of Kent — for Thanet was an island in the year 597.

The trilogy of which this constitutes the first volume is without doubt the *magnum opus* of its author. F. R. Webber is Secretary of the Committee on Church Architecture of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. He is editor of *The Church Builder* and author of "The Small Church," "Church Symbolism" and "Studies in the Liturgy," all of which are standard works in their respective fields. He is himself a preacher of many years' experience in a large city parish.

Mr. Webber is well known for his staunch conservatism. He misses no opportunity in this volume for pointing to the extraordinary fecundity of Gospel preaching as compared to the sterility and indeed purely negative value of modernist homiletics. Throughout he emphasizes the need of expository preaching of the great truths of sin and grace.

The book is warmly recommended to pastors and to institutional and public libraries for its eminent readability as well as for its value as a work of reference. Conservative Christian pastors especially will warmly welcome these volumes for their strong evangelical emphasis. The case histories presented will serve as stimuli, to the younger clergy particularly, to preach the Word in all its truth and purity.

(Peekskill, New York)

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MOTTO: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding aught of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquillity, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

VOLUME XIV

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IN THIS ISSUE: A Bane of Large Church Organizations — Concerning Consultative Relationships with Erroristic Church Bodies — The Spirit, the Faith, and the Method of Liberalism — The Distinctive Doctrines of the Synodical Conference: Of Church Union; On "Open Questions;" Antichrist — The Old and the New Modernism — Some Thoughts on the Doctrine of Separation for Our Day — A Modernistic Editorial — The Old Charge of the Heresy of Crypto-Calvinism Raised Against Missouri — Review of Publications — What Our Readers Say.

❶ **A Bane of Large Church Organizations**

"The Spirit of the World is distressingly prevalent in Protestant Churches, and in all Christendom. . . . Worldliness, pride, desire for power, professionalism. . . . It seems that the larger and more powerful any Church organization or institution becomes the more naturally it attracts to its leadership selfish and ambitious men, who use it, all too largely, for their own aggrandizement."

Halley's *Pocket Bible Handbook*, p. 643.

❷ **Concerning Consultative Relationships with Erroristic Church Bodies**

In 1925 Dr. Theo. Graebner wrote: "In the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America" (now known as The National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.) "the United Lutheran Church holds 'a consultative relationship.' It looks upon this type of membership as safeguarding the confessional principle, while at the same time 'this partial membership is not indicative of hostility to an idea of interdenominational cooperation.'" Incidentally, the ULC has since, quite expectedly and logically, taken

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the final step of full membership in the
 NCCCUSA. But to continue to quote Dr.
 Graebner: "The membership satisfies the
 liberal element; the 'consultative' pacifies the
 conservatives." (*The Problem of Lutheran
 Union*, p. 26.)

Make your own application. There is
 plenty room for it in the Missouri Synod
 today.

P. H. B.

❶ The Spirit, the Faith, and the Method of Liberalism

In the "Readers Say" Department of
United Evangelical Action (March 15, 1953)
 there appeared a letter which stated, quite
 well, the following:

"The ultimate end of liberals, like that
 of Rome, is control of the visible Church
 through which they would 'bring in the King-
 dom.' The key to our battle against liberal-
 ism is rigid definition of and practical
 adherence to fundamental Bible doctrines.
 We should here shun every compromise and
 fellowship based on sentiment rather than
 truth. (II John 9-11.) Modernists are very
 adroit at changing their 'front,' of saying one
 thing while meaning another. They are to
 be judged more by what they *don't* say or
 do than by what they say or do."

We would of course sharpen the sentence
 about fundamental doctrines so as to include
 all Bible doctrine. Beyond that we can sub-
 scribe wholeheartedly to the above statement
 and offer it as a fine outline for a considera-
 tion of the aims and methods of liberalism.
 The doctrine of the Church is in the forefront
 of the battle against liberalism. Each liberal
 or group of liberals has its own definition of
 "the kingdom," just as socialists and evolu-
 tionists vie with each other about their own
 particular ideas concerning these concepts.
 In the mouth of thoroughgoing Modernists
 who invariably are addicted to some
 enthusiasm concerning a social gospel the
 term may stand for a mere socialistic "King-
 dom" of this world akin to if not actually
 identical with something as far removed
 from the real kingdom of God (which is
 not of this world) as e.g. a communistic
 dictatorship. It is for this reason that some
 churchmen of an extreme modernistic stripe
 have had to be named as members of Com-
 munistic or pro-Communistic groups by
 committees investigating un-American activi-
 ties. In the case of others it may stand for
 a social(istic) conception of another kind
 with more or less of a religious or "Christian"
 tinge. Even as we write this, the day's mail
 brings a report of a statement by Dr. Walter
 W. Van Kirk, executive director of the
 Department of International Justice and
 Goodwill of the National Council of the
 Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Dr. Van
 Kirk is reported to have said in an address
 on The Church and World Government:
 "The churches of Christ in the United States
 are committed to the establishment of a
 world political order. It could hardly be
 otherwise. Christians are the divinely in-
 spired propagandists of world community."
 Such statements could be cited any day of
 the year. Usually the ultimate aim envisions
 some millennialistic ideal. But, always,
 control of the visible church, or of as large a

segment as possible, is the means to the desired end.

Most significant is the closing statement of the letter which we have cited, that liberals "are to be judged more by what they do *not* say or do than by what they say or do." When, e.g., a modernist like Dr. Walter Russel Bowie (one of the translators of the RSV) wants to reveal what he believes (or disbelieves) about the occurrences at the Baptism of Jesus, he proceeds as follows: "When Jesus came up out of the river, there was such a shining of the Spirit in his face that men, looking back upon it, said that the Spirit of God had come upon him like a dove descending out of heaven. They said there was a voice, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'" (*The Story of the Bible*, p. 413.) Now what is wrong about such a description? Does not what is wrong about it lie chiefly in what Dr. Bowie fails to say rather than in what he does say?

The spirit and method of liberalism which we have been characterizing is evident also in the so-called Common Confession adopted by the American Lutheran Church and by a convention majority within the Missouri Synod in 1950. This "Confession," just at crucial points, leaves unconfessed what needs precisely to be confessed if it is to serve the cause of real agreement in the truth of God's Holy Word by the parties concerned. The point at issue between the Missouri Synod and the ALC in the doctrine of inspiration (as shown e.g. by Missouri's *Brief Statement* of 1932 and by the ALC *Declaration* of 1938) is the extent of inspiration. How much of the Bible is God's Word, — all of its words? The Common Confession fails to state as much, — also in its tentative Part II, which moreover is expressly restricted to being normative for Christian life rather than for doctrine which is said to have been disposed of in what is now referred to as "Part I." For here one finds an incidental definition of "God's verbally inspired Word" carefully restricted as follows: "God moved men to write what He wanted recorded in the words which He wanted employed." (Art. VI.) Instead of being given a clearcut confession concerning what is at issue between us we are left with a batch of questions, — How much of the Bible did God want recorded? Which of its words did He want employed, — all of them, or just some of them? And just what more precisely is the meaning of this phrase, — "wanted employed"? (Art.

VI.) Concerning the doctrine of Creation the Missouri Synod confesses in its *Brief Statement* that the world was created in the manner and in the space of time recorded especially in Genesis, that is, in six days, and it rejects every kind of evolutionary doctrine, theistic as well as atheistic. In the ALC, on the other hand, men are free to preach and to teach either that the world was created in six days or that it came into being in immense periods of time, and Missouri's rejection of evolution is publicly denounced. The Common Confession, however, says no more concerning this matter than that "God in the beginning created man." And so one could go on through other doctrines, showing that the Common Confession fails to confess precisely what should be confessed in it in order to settle doctrinal differences between Missouri and the ALC. The basis for "union" that the Common Confession presents is a liberalistic one, leading to unionism.

It has been well said in the letter which we have cited that the right preventive for such a situation will always remain *rigid definition of and practical adherence to Bible doctrine*, and that with this there will go a shunning of every compromise and of fellowship based on sentiment rather than on truth.

Let us accept no substitutes for the truth, and let us accept no substitutes — by blank silence — for the confession of it!

P. H. B.

● The Distinctive Doctrines of the Synodical Conference Of Church-Union

All *Christians* are already *one* in Christ. Christ's promise that "there shall be one fold and one shepherd" (John 10, 16), has been in the course of fulfillment ever since the times of the apostles, whenever a soul by true conversion was added to the communion of believers. All Christians actually agree on the main article of Christian religion, namely, on the article that they have forgiveness of their sins through faith in Christ alone, and not by their own works, although many of them are in external connection with heterodox churches, and, by infirmity, err in some parts of doctrine. For it is this faith that makes a man a Christian and unites him with the spiritual body of Christ.

Nevertheless, it is a deplorable state of things, that there are external Christian communities differing in doctrine. Sects, as stated before, do not exist according to God's will and good pleasure, but only by God's forbearance. All Christians, therefore, should be desirous of reunion, and earnestly labor for the same.

But the union sought for must not be a so-called organic union only, but a union in faith and doctrine. Christians may differ and, in many cases, owing to different circumstances, must differ as to ceremonies, external organization, etc. But there is one thing concerning which all Christians of all times and of all countries should perfectly agree — they should be one in *faith and doctrine*. "I beseech you, brethren," St. Paul says, "by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (I Cor. 1, 10).

How is this union to be effected? Sects arose when certain persons taught contrary to the Scriptures, and others, instead of rebuking their errors, united with them. The only way, therefore, to cause the divisions to disappear, is to remind the Christians of their duty to part with error, and, consequently, with all persons that persist in proclaiming doctrines contrary to Holy Scripture, and to unite with those that teach the pure Word of God. Christians should never agree to disagree on any article of faith, but earnestly endeavor to bring about an agreement on all doctrines revealed in Holy Scripture. Nothing but the revealed truth, and the *whole* revealed truth — that is the platform which God has made for the Christian, and which every Christian is commanded to stand upon. An agreement on a more or less comprehensive collection of so-called "fundamental articles," selected by man, leaving a portion of the divinely revealed truth to the discretion of the dissenting parties, is a position wholly unbecoming to Christians, for, not to deny, but to confess the Word of Christ, is their duty in this world.

But is perfect agreement concerning doctrine possible? We most emphatically answer: it is, as the Scriptures are perfectly clear on all articles of faith, every article of faith being revealed at least somewhere in

the Scriptures in plain and proper words. God, by graciously giving His Word to men, did not propose to them a collection of riddles, but made His Word to be "a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path" (Ps. 119, 105), "a light that shineth in a dark place" (II Pet. 1, 19), "making wise the simple" (Ps. 19, 7). Error concerning any article of faith is impossible as long as the words of Scripture are retained as they read. Ere falling into error is possible, the plain words of Scripture must have either been entirely set aside or twisted from their natural meaning according to human reason or feelings.

On "Open Questions"

There are, indeed, "open questions" if this term is used in the sense of "theological problems." Such are all those questions which are not decided in Holy Scripture. Open questions in this sense are never to be "closed," since no human authority, be it called "Church" or otherwise, can supply the lacking decision of Holy Scripture. This would be "adding unto the Word of God," and denying that the written Word of God is the only rule and standard of faith and life. Theologians should not waste their time and energy in trying to solve questions not answered by the Bible. On the other hand, all doctrines revealed in Holy Scripture are to be accepted and believed, for the very reason that they are propounded in Holy Scripture, no matter whether "decided" in the Symbolical Books and agreed upon by the theologians or not. To declare doctrines revealed in the Bible to be "open" or "free" for the reason that they are not yet "symbolically fixed" in the Confessions of the orthodox Church, or not yet accepted by all orthodox theologians, would, in fact, be the same as to put the Church, her Confessions and theologians, in the place of Holy Scripture, and to ascribe to the Church and her theologians the authority of establishing articles of faith. We, of course, insist upon accepting the Confessions of the Lutheran Church without exception and reserve, as we are convinced that *all* doctrines propounded by them (either "ex professo" or incidentally) are in strict accordance with Holy Scripture, and we, moreover, maintain that a qualified acceptance of the Confessions of the Lutheran Church makes a qualified Lutheran. But we, nevertheless, denounce any position as un-Lutheran according to which the Con-

fessions are to take the place of the Scriptures.

Antichrist

Holy Scripture speaks of "*many* antichrists" (I John 2, 18). As Christ alone is to rule in His Church by His Word, all false teachers setting forth in the Church their own doctrine instead of Christ's set themselves against Christ, attempt to cast off the authority of Christ and to overthrow His kingdom. Hence all false teachers are called antichrists. But the Scriptures speak also of *one* Antichrist in whom the principles and spirit of the many antichrists are to culminate. This Antichrist, commonly called the *great* Antichrist and graphically described in the second chapter of the second epistle to the Thessalonians, we believe to be the pope at Rome, the papacy.

To this doctrine, so clearly stated in the Confessions of the Lutheran Church and once generally accepted by all Lutherans, exception is taken now. Modern Lutheran theologians, although acknowledging antichristian traits in the papacy, are waiting for a still greater foe of the Christian Church. But it is from ignorance or from a lack of due consideration as to what the Christian Church really is, when the pope at Rome is not recognized as the greatest possible human foe of the Christian Church, and when worldly potentates like Napoleon, or even Boulanger, are thought of as the Antichrist.

The Christian Church is the communion of believers, that is, of those who believe that they are justified and saved by confiding in Christ's merit alone and not in any merits of their own. It is this faith that constitutes the very essence of the spiritual life of a Christian. What the water is for the fish and the air for bodily life, that is reliance on God's grace in Christ alone for the spiritual life of the Christian. As soon as this faith is enkindled in their hearts they become Christians, as long as this faith continues in them they remain Christians, and the very moment this faith is extinguished in them, they cease to be Christians. Who, therefore, is the greatest enemy of the Christians or the Christian Church? He who uses every means to destroy in the hearts of Christians the faith that relies on Christ's merit alone. But this is what Rome is engaged in. Rome not only rejects the doctrine of justification through faith in Christ alone, but she, in the

Resolutions of the Council of Trent, *curses* this truth by which Christians live. And she not only curses it, but the whole system and machinery of Romanism has the tendency to hinder and destroy faith in Christ and to engender trust in man's own works. It was, indeed, a fearful thing when men like Nero slaughtered thousands of Christians. But it was a small affair when compared with what Rome does. For Rome incessantly takes the spiritual life of millions of Christians by taking from them faith in Christ as the only mediator between God and man, not to mention here that Rome also drank the blood of the martyrs whenever she had the power to do so.

Again, Christians are to be ruled by Christ's Word alone (John 8, 31), Christ claiming the prerogative to be their only Master (Mt. 23, 8). But the pope at Rome, under the pretence of being Christ's vicar on earth, alters and annuls Christ's Word and Commandments at his pleasure, bearing himself as if he were a God on earth.

And this dreadful and blasphemous work Rome does under the disguise of exquisite holiness. The infidels, of course, blaspheme Christ too, but they do it openly, and all Christians know that they have to beware of them. Rome, however, rejects and blasphemes Christ under the outward appearance of Christianity, and under the claim of being the Church without which there is no salvation, sustaining this false claim by all manner of deceits, by signs, and by lying wonders. Thus the papacy is the greatest possible foe of Christ and His Church, and all the traits which in II Thess. 2 are ascribed to the Antichrist, that he is to arise in the Church, exalting himself above all human authority, assuming to himself the prerogative of God, and sustaining these assumptions "with all power and signs and lying wonders" — all these traits we find in the pope at Rome. Hence, we fully and heartily indorse the doctrine of the Lutheran Confessions, that the pope is the great Antichrist of whom Scripture has prophesied. In the papacy we see the great Antichrist standing barely and squarely in the sight of the Christians and doing his fearful work, and, therefore, we are not looking forward to any other great Antichrist to come in future times.

We do not, of course, hold, as we are frequently represented, that this doctrine of the Antichrist is a fundamental article of

the Christian religion. For man is saved by knowing Christ, not by knowing and recognizing Antichrist. But what we hold is this: every Christian, knowing Christ well, will recognize the papacy to be the very Antichrist, as soon as he becomes thoroughly acquainted with the teaching and doings of Rome. Especially we hold those *theologians* to be rather poor theologians who, knowing the doctrine and practice of the papacy, fail to recognize it to be the true Antichrist.

The Distinctive Doctrines and Usages of the General Bodies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States — The Synodical Conference, by Rev. Prof. F. Pieper, 1893, pp. 136-145.

● The Old and the New Modernism

"It is no accident that modernism with its faith in man, its certainty of human progress and its evolutionary view of history and religion, originated in a time of unclouded skies. There was no wicked Hitler to vex these early modernists. No boastful Mussolini disturbed their dreams. No Stalin haunted them. No atom frightened them. It was a snug little world before the first World War, and modernism was the theological expression of its unbounded faith in man and his ability to run the world.

"It was no accident that modernism went into a tailspin after the crash of the stock market, the coming of the depression, the rise of Mussolini and Hitler. Then the modernists re-examined their theological convictions, unloaded some excess baggage and endeavored to sail their craft in the foul weather. But modernism did not change its fundamental principles. It was still modernism even though it preferred the term liberalism.

"But modernism didn't go far enough in its adjustments to the bad times. In war-stricken Europe, which had gone through a living hell with its ideologies in ruins, there was no faith in the fat, optimistic liberalism of the Americans. Neo-Orthodoxy originated in a ruined Europe, not with the well-fed American liberals, for well-fed people seldom give birth to profound philosophies. Neo-Orthodoxy, deeply tinged with pessimism and talking vaguely of the judgment of God, betrays its origin in its war-stricken environment. It is a reaction from that easy-going liberalism which has no message and no

support for a people who have seen everything go with the wind. It is not an intellectual system, for no philosophy with its view of reason can be an intellectual system. It is not a theology, for no theology which ignores history and deems the Christian facts irrelevant, can be a theology. It is a conglomeration of theological gibberish which always follows the collapse of some tower of Babel. Proud liberalism, building a tower to heaven without God, has fallen into confusion of speech.

"The current repudiation of modernism and liberalism by the Neo-Orthodox and others has deceived many conservatives into thinking that liberalism is on its way out and orthodoxy is returning. S. S. Lappin (*United Evangelical Action*, 11-1-1950) quotes Elton Trueblood, John Baillie and Nels Ferre, as having repudiated the main hypothesis of modernism, whereas a reading of their books will reveal that they simply shifted from the old modernism to the new modernism. Modernism is not on the wane, it has simply changed its form. Its basic repudiation: the authority of the Bible as the Word of God, still characterizes modern theological scholarship."

Chester E. Tulga, *The Case Against Neo-Orthodoxy*, pp. 12-14.

● Some Thoughts on the Doctrine of Separation for Our Day

"The New Testament not only calls for witnessing to the faith, but calls for contention for the faith."

"And this is love, that we walk after his commandments." (II John 4.)

"The doctrine of separation runs through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation as truly as the red thread of the atoning blood. It is based, not upon an isolated text as some assert, or any text of doubtful interpretation, but upon the basic fact of incompatibility between the like and the unlike, seen in both nature and grace. It is based upon the fundamental necessity for separating right from wrong, (in order to) preserve right; to separate truth from error, (in order) to preserve truth; to separate the true Christ, that He might not be confused with the false Christs of men; to separate the true church that it might not lose its identity in the false

church; to separate believers from unbelievers that the world might always have a true witness; to separate true doctrine from false, that the world may always have a saving Gospel.

"The liberals mouth orthodox phrases to the confusion of the faithful; the fundamentalist lions lie down and eat straw like oxen, pleading that there must be unity or else the Catholics or Communists or some other bad man will get them for sure. So huddling together for mutual safety they look with horror upon some uncouth Elijah who dares to stand for God alone.

"Borderline believers are neither fish nor fowl, and become a problem to both of the groups with which they are allied. They lack the orthodoxy of the true believer and the respectability of the honest liberal.

"The history of denominational fundamentalism is strewn with the wrecks of families of dead fundamentalists. They were men faithful to the Gospel, but in denominational loyalty they reared their families in a liberal denomination, exposed them to the influence of liberal leadership, sent them to liberal denominational schools, and often lived to see their children forsake the faith of their parents because of the denominational apostasy to which they were exposed." (It's part of the high cost of "staying in.")

"In liberal ecclesiasticism, many conservatives do not get promotions, but get in very little trouble over their orthodoxy if they are careful to support Modernism with their money and urge their churches to support a modernistic program. In fact, many in liberal denominations emphasize the fact that their liberal masters permit them to preach the Gospel, but they seldom mention the money price they pay to keep this dubious peace. They do not insist that their money preach the same Gospel as their lips — a strange situation indeed! Millions of dollars are being contributed by evangelicals within liberal denominations (sometimes because their pastors have not informed them) to spread Modernism and destroy the very faith held so dear by the contributors.

"The prophets denounced false priests and false prophets. They did not hesitate to condemn false prophets, professional ecclesiastics and false teachers who had departed from the faith or from righteousness. Isaiah (9, 16; 3, 12) complains that many leaders have become misleaders, as in our day.

Jeremiah (5, 30, 31) mourned because many priests were unfaithful to God and the people seemed to approve. The false prophets, strong in numbers and popularity, were very influential. This told heavily against the true prophets, for the people could not believe that the one man standing alone was right, and that his opponents, who were many, were wrong. The seats and trappings of office always effect the masses who are slow to come to the conclusion that their preachers and teachers are misleading them. To denounce the religious leadership of the day when it leads the people astray is a difficult ministry involving suffering and persecution, yet the prophets did this constantly."

"The greatest enemy of orthodoxy is not the apostates who can be so readily identified, but the betrayers of orthodoxy who profess allegiance to it."

(From: *The Doctrine of Separation in These Times* by Chester E. Tulga, D.D. Published by the Conservative Baptist Fellowship, 2561 N. Clark Street, Chicago 14, Ill. 25 cts.)

● A Modernistic Editorial

The October, 1952 issue of the *American Lutheran* brought an editorial on "Fellowship with other Christians" which is typical of the attitude that is nowadays quite often taken in public utterances, and even in official utterances within the Missouri Synod. These presentations are considered scholarly because they seem to show erudition and often use the vague language of modern theology which is strong in rejecting genuine Lutheran principles and tenets but fails to put any plain clear-cut information in their place. This spirit of uncertainty has entered the Missouri Synod in the last few decades. It is the deepest cause of the strong yearning for union at any price with other church bodies which are not strictly Lutheran that we are witnessing today.

The author of the editorial just mentioned in the first place sets forth his idea of how Missourians have arrived at their conception and practice of exclusive church fellowship with such Lutherans only as agree with them in the pure doctrine. He distinguishes between the Scriptural concept or "Bible term" of the word "fellowship" and our common use or "Church term" of this word. He

imagines that the usage of the present conception of the term "church fellowship" came about in this manner: some Lutherans started from what he calls the "Bible term" for fellowship (*koinonia* in Greek). This word, he asserts, is used in Scripture for something which the Holy Ghost gives, namely, the spiritual unity which obtains between all Christians. But because the English version in some passages translates the word *koinonia* with "fellowship," those Lutherans gave the "Bible term" *koinonia* an entirely different meaning, namely, the attitude which we take toward other Christians, granting them, or withholding from them, fraternal relations. By qualifying this sense of the word "fellowship" with noun modifiers, such as "pulpit," "altar," and "prayer," they finally arrived at an altogether different conception of the term "fellowship" which, he says, "has only tangential contacts with the Scriptural concept."

But this presentation does the greatest injustice to Lutherans who deny church fellowship to those who disagree with them in doctrine. They arrive at their conception of the term "fellowship" in an entirely different way from which the writer of that editorial imagines. He seems to forget (or never to have known) the fact that the word "fellowship" (*koinonia*) has more than one use in the Scriptures. It is not only used for the spiritual unity which the Holy Ghost works in the hearts of all believers, as it does in Philemon 6 (Rev. Version: "fellowship of thy faith") and in Phil. 2, 1 ("fellowship of the Spirit"). It also expresses the company which a person keeps with other persons or with things. In this sense the word *koinonia* is used in Acts 2, 42, where it expresses something which the early Christians *were doing*: they kept fellowship with each other just as they faithfully heard the word of the Apostles, frequently celebrated the Lord's Supper, and were constant in prayer. In II Cor. 6, 14 we read the admonition: "What communion (*koinonia*) has light with darkness?" The admonition is to the effect that Christians should separate themselves, and keep separate from, unbelievers: "wherefore come out from among them and be separate" (v. 17). In Gal. 2, 9 we read: "They gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship." Here the word *koinonia* expresses the fraternal relations which the other Apostles acknowledged and kept with Paul and with Barnabas. In Eph. 5, 11 ("Have no fellow-

ship with the unfruitful works of darkness") the verb *synkoinete* evidently means "to have and exercise fellowship" and does *not* indicate something which the Holy Ghost gives.

It is seen from this what a superficial and arbitrary method it is to call one of the two senses in which Scripture uses the word *koinonia* "the Bible term," to distinguish from this "the Church term," and to accuse all those who use the word "fellowship" in a sense which is wholly Biblical of twisting a Bible term into their own sense of the word. Faithful Lutherans of all times from Luther and his associates down to the present day have not arrived at their use of the term "fellowship" by distorting a "Bible term" into a new meaning. They simply base their conception of church fellowship and fraternal relations on those Bible texts which speak of the fellowship which Christians should grant or deny.

The *American Lutheran* editorialist adds a threefold admonition: 1) that we realize clearly the fact of the difference between "fellowship" (Church term) and "fellowship" (Bible term); 2) that we stop misapplying Bible passages to bolster our view of the former, etc.; 3) that we agree on some other descriptive word in place of "fellowship" (Church term). This threefold admonition is entirely out of place, because it rests on a false assumption. It is also absolutely useless; for such deliberations as he recommends would not only take a long time like those "at Kaesong and Panmunjom" as he rightly assumes, but they would also be just as unfruitful as those deliberations with Communists, because true Lutherans and modernistic Lutherans would *never* agree on these matters. Thus the *American Lutheran* editorialists's substitute for the historical and Biblical conception and practice of church fellowship as exercised in the Lutheran Church would leave the whole matter in utter confusion, as modernistic directions always do.

In order to render his idea more plausible the writer of the editorial under discussion inserts what he calls a parallel. He refers to the term "sacrament" for Baptism and the Lord's Supper and tells his readers an amazing story about the origin of this term as he imagines it. He says: "Since the seventeenth century, Lutheran theologians have generally agreed among themselves to

define a 'sacrament' as 'a sacred act' etc. (the correct definition of the term). Then he goes on and ridicules this definition by applying it to Scripture texts where the Greek word for sacrament (*mysterion*) occurs.

But where did the writer get his information? The idea that Lutheran theologians of the seventeenth century concocted this definition is mere fiction. Its origin lies much farther back. Luther already points out the fact that, and the reason why, we teach only two sacraments in the Church by emphasizing the essential attributes of a sacrament. (Cp. Baier, III, pp. 401, 403.) Martin Chemnitz in his *Examen Concilii Tridentini* says in plain words that the expression "sacrament" for Baptism and the Lord's Supper is *not* a Bible term but an ecclesiastical term. Quoting a number of ancient Church fathers, he shows that these divine institutions in which God through visible signs offers, confers, and seals the grace which Christ has earned for us have always been called "sacraments" in the Christian Church. Accepting this terminology and applying it to various usages in the Church, he finds, like Luther, that there are only two things which strictly and properly may be called sacraments, namely Baptism and the Lord's Supper. However, the word may in a somewhat looser sense be applied to other things also, as it is e.g. by the Apology of the Augsburg Confession when it calls absolution a sacrament. The fact that theologians of the seventeenth century well knew the distinction between the strict and the wider use of the word "sacrament" is seen by the quotations from Quenstedt and Gerhard in Baier's *Compendium*, III, p. 434f. They agreed perfectly in this respect with the theologians of the sixteenth century. Hence they are not guilty as charged by the *American Lutheran*, because they never invented the well known definition of the word "sacrament." Besides, the term "sacrament" is no parallel at all to the term "fellowship" in the sense of "fraternal relations." For the former is really a church term while the latter is a Bible term. This reference does not clarify anything at all, but merely adds to the confusion already introduced by the *American Lutheran* writer.

But to return to the practice of church fellowship, as the writer now recommends it, what substitute does he offer for the practice of simply following a clear divine command

which forbids fraternal relations with false prophets and false churches? Since Rom. 16, 17; Mt. 7, 15; Tit. 3, 10 and similar texts have in the circles of the *American Lutheran* by specious interpretation been eliminated from the number of Bible passages which regulate the proper practice of church fellowship, what directive does the *American Lutheran* offer? "The common participation in the Gospel publicly taught in such a way that it is recognizably the good news of the grace of God in Christ Jesus, and in the holy sacraments publicly administered in such a way that they are the means of grace which Christ instituted is all that is necessary — according to the VIIth Article of the Augsburg Confession — for true unity of the Church."

Here the writer of the *American Lutheran* editorial makes the mistake of injecting a thought into the Seventh Article of the Augsburg Confession which is not at all contained in this article (the very sort of thing which he falsely charges others with doing). For Art. VII of the A.C. does not speak of fraternal relations of visible church bodies or of individual Christians with one another, but of the true spiritual unity of the one Holy Christian Church which the Holy Ghost works through the means of grace. While Romanists had insisted on the contention that uniformity of ceremonies is essential for the unity of the Church, Lutherans had replied that for the true unity of the Church uniformity of ceremonies is *unessential*, because the Holy Ghost works faith and spiritual unity among Christians (which is indissolubly connected with faith in Christ) not through ceremonies, but through the means of grace.

That this is the true meaning of article VII of the A.C. is shown by its wording from beginning to end ("One holy Church . . . the congregation of saints;" "the true unity of the Church;" "the Gospel and the Sacraments" as the means whereby the Holy Ghost creates this unity in the hearts of men; the reference to the words of St. Paul: "one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all;" and the express repudiation of ceremonies as essential to this unity). [It is likewise shown by the Roman Catholic "Confutation" of the Augsburg Confession. — P. H. B.] This meaning is also strongly confirmed by the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Art. VII and VIII. Mark especially the words: "We are speaking of true, i.e., of spiritual unity . . . without which faith

in the heart, or righteousness of heart before God, cannot exist. For this we say that similarity of human rites, whether universal or particular, is not necessary, because the righteousness of faith is not a righteousness bound to certain traditions . . . as the righteousness of the Law was bound to the Mosaic ceremonies, because this righteousness of the heart is a matter that quickens the heart. To this quickening, human traditions, whether they be universal or particular, contribute nothing; neither are they effects of the Holy Ghost, as are chastity, patience, the fear of God, love to one's neighbor, and the works of love." (*Trigl.*, pp. 237, 239.) Faith, and the fruits of faith, together with true spiritual unity, which are always connected with true faith, are worked by the Holy Ghost through the means of grace, but not by human ceremonies, which are therefore unessential for the true unity of the *Una Sancta*, the one "holy Christian Church." This is the true meaning of the Seventh Article of the Augsburg Confession. But the *American Lutheran* editorial writer reads into this article an instruction about fraternal relations between visible church bodies or individual Christians, telling us under what conditions such fellowship should be practiced or withheld. On the basis of his faulty conception he arrives at the result that the use of the Gospel and of the sacraments are, as long as their essence is still recognizable, an adequate basis for church fellowship.

How does this false principle work out in our relation to the Roman Catholic Church and other sectarian churches in which the means of grace, especially the sacraments, are considered as mere outward signs? We are not told. But since the visible Church is *divided* into many separate bodies, the writer said: "On the other hand, 'fellowship' (Church term) requires such a concern for the truth" (why?) "that even at the risk of schism Christians must define the Faith over against error in clear and unmistakable terms." Why and how the necessity for creeds and even a schism, a separation in the Church, should result from our duty to keep fellowship with other Christians is not clear. In any case, a "Church term" is a poor substitute for a clear command of God. According to our Confession, Lutherans base their duty to confess the revealed truth in clear terms over against error and to separate themselves from false teachers and those who follow them simply on clear divine

commands, such as Mt. 28, 20; Mt. 7, 15, and many more. Rejecting all false teaching and keeping ourselves separate from false churches does not mean condemning such Christians as merely err in their simplicity.

Nor was the idea in the mind of the authors of the Formula of Concord that "fellowship" (Church term) requires such a concern for the truth that even at the risk of schism Christians must define the Faith over against error in clear and unmistakable terms. They evidently meant exactly what they really said. Dissensions and disharmony had entered even the Lutheran Church, because a number of its theologians had not remained faithful to its clear and Scriptural Confessions. *Hence the necessity* to restate the pure doctrine with special regard to those points which had at that time become controversial. (*Trigl.*, p. 849f.) And this aim was, under the blessing of God, achieved. unity of doctrine and harmony reigned in the Lutheran Church as long as the Formula of Concord was faithfully adhered to.

But how does the false principle which is derived from a misunderstanding of Art. VII of the Augsburg Confession work out in practice as regards our relation to members of other church bodies, especially those which teach and defend false doctrines? The writer tells us: "Our common participation in the holy Gospel and in the holy sacraments makes every baptized user of the means of grace a brother and a member of every other baptized user of the means of grace regardless of color, race — or denomination." Accordingly he argues that it is our Christian duty to fraternize with other users of the means of grace even in false churches.

Now even our children know that the Holy Ghost keeps all true believers in the whole world — those in false churches not excepted — in true spiritual unity through their common faith in one and the same Savior. They know that as members of the spiritual body of Christ they are all brethren and sisters in Christ. They also know that all sham Christians in the Lutheran Church as well as in erring churches are through unbelief *excluded* from all spiritual blessings, that they have forgiveness of their sins neither in this life nor in the life to come if they persist in their unbelief; that they are not members of the body of Christ, but members of the kingdom of the devil. (Apology of the Augsburg Confession, *Trigl.*,

p. 231ff.) But now we are told that such members of Satan and his kingdom *are our brethren* if only they outwardly use the means of grace, Word and Sacrament, and that it is therefore our duty to fraternize with members of false churches because we use the same means of grace! Even members of our own church, if they lack true faith in Christ are not in fact and in truth our brethren and sisters in Christ, because they are not members of the *Una Sancta*, the one holy Christian Church. But since we are not able to search the hearts we must consider and treat them as brethren and sisters. But the statements that all baptized users of the means of grace in all of the various church bodies *are our brethren*, and that we must on that account fraternize with them, is false doctrine pure and simple. It betrays a Romanizing conception of the Church as it is so often found among modernistic Lutherans, who speak of dead members of the body of Christ.

Such a false conception of the Church leads to all kind of unionistic practices, and it is one of the causes which has led to the present deranged state of affairs in our Missouri Synod. Unity and harmony in the Synodical Conference were lost in exactly the same manner as they were lost in the Lutheran Church at the time before the Formula of Concord. The only way to regain true unity would be by a sincere return to the old Lutheran and Scriptural truth in doctrine and practice.

J. B.

● The Old Charge of the Heresy of Crypto-Calvinism Raised Against Missouri

(EDITORIAL NOTE: In the "Correspondence" Section of the *Lutheran Outlook* for July, 1953, official organ of the American Lutheran Conference, edited by Dr. J. A. Dell, American Lutheran Church theologian, a letter is brought under the heading "Common Confession" asking for some thundering against Missouri because of its old "heresy" of "Crypto-Calvinism" — defined as its letting "the grace of God" "decide the eternal fate of the individual" in the doctrines of Conversion and Election. The letter publicized by Dr. Dell and his brief editorial reply declaring the columns of the *Lutheran Outlook* open to such thundering, appear in their entirety as follows. — P. H. B.)

The Common Confession business robs me of some sleep and inner peace. Last night the thought came to me: the only man

who can do something in this matter and has the nerve to do it is Dr. Dell. So you understand why I write these lines.

I am no synod-minded man. I do not fight for the ALC and against Missouri or any other synod, but I fight for pure Lutheranism. I am not interested in Part II of the Common Confession. Is it meant as an addition to our Lutheran Confessions which every Lutheran pastor in the U. S. A. must subscribe to in the future? I am interested only in the two main points which separated us from Missouri, and which are still a stumblingblock — more or less — in the rest of the synods: conversion and predestination.

Conversion: the old strict Lutherans against Melancthonians. I don't think that Missouri really had much reason to doubt the orthodoxy of the ALC, only a few individual pastors of German descent excepted. The "famous" Fritschel statement of *Selbst-Entscheidung* has been officially disavowed by the Iowa Synod long ago.

Predestination: Missouri calls it Gnadenwahl. That one word tells the whole story. Calvin lets the sovereign will of God decide the eternal fate of the individual. Missouri says: No, that is heresy — it is the grace of God. Doctor, we common mortals take you for a theologian. Please define accurately the difference between the sovereign will of God and the grace of God. It was, indeed, no slander when the theologians in Germany called Missourians Cryptocalvinists! Do you remember that in the last decade of the last century when Pieper wrote against our synodical fathers, he always operated with Romans 9 just as the Calvinists do to this day? I have heard people in . . . state what their Missouri pastor has preached to them. No, I did not argue with them; I simply listened. It sounded Calvinistic, not Lutheran.

Now our men got together with the Missourians to work out a Common Confession. And Missouri was victorious!! The definition of election (IV) contains truths which no Christian denies, but Doctor, that is not the Lutheran doctrine of predestination (Art. XI)! The Missourians knew what they wanted, and on what they had to insist in order to be acceptable to their co-heretics. They sacrificed the Biblical-Lutheran truth to the Missourian heresy! And our men yielded . . .

Doctor, thunder your "Quos ego!"

Fraternally yours,
(Name withheld)

(Thanks for the compliment, but I am afraid my thunderer is a little out of whack. But if anyone else wants to do a little thundering, I'll stand by and see that they have a fair chance. Ed.)

● Review of Publications

The Doctrine of Separation in These Times.

Chester E. Tulga, D.D. Published by the Conservative Baptist Fellowship, 2561 Clark Street, Chicago 14, Ill. 64 pages, 5x7; stiff paper covers. 25 cts.

Other denominations have had to feel the full force of modernism and liberalism, with its bold denials of Christian truth, long before they came knocking at the door of the Missouri Synod. The Conservative Baptist Fellowship is one of the numerous fundamental groups which, as a result, applied the Scriptural principle of separation (the negative side of the confessional principle), Rom. 16, 17 etc., to itself as over against its parent body and has long since well established itself as an independent church. In the present brochure it presents the important Christian doctrine of separation, which is so largely denied also by liberalistic unionists within the Missouri Synod today, — and just ignored by others. There is much good food for thought offered here. We shall on other pages of the *Confessional Lutheran* bring from the brochure some quotations for which we feel we cannot spare the space here. It proved heartening to us that there is so very little to which we must take exception at all in this presentation. For instance, the word "unsaved" is used in a sense in which its use is common in Reformed circles while we studiously avoid it because we know and believe that Christ died to save all men. And again, we reserve the terms "separatist" and "separatism" for sinful, forbidden isolation as over against the *separation* which God commands. "Unity," which we reserve for true unity, is used for mere outward union. We do not regard ourselves as Fundamentalists, because we insist on acceptance also of the "non-fundamentals" of Holy Scripture. With these cautions we recommend this presentation of this important Christian doctrine as very timely, and we would encourage readers to secure a copy for themselves at the low price at which it is being offered.

P. H. B.

The Case Against Neo-Orthodoxy. By Chester E. Tulga, D. D. 64 pages, 5x7 in., paper covers. Conservative Baptist Fellowship, 2561 N Clark Street, Chicago 14, Ill. 25 cts.

This is one of a series of "little books on big subjects" for alert Christians, attractively designed in convenient pocket size. Anyone who may want to acquaint himself quickly with the subject at hand, the "so-called" theology of Barth and Brunner and their camp followers will here find a well documented and simple presentation of this poisonous but popularism of our day.

The Reformed denial of the utter corruption of natural man in matters spiritual is prominent on pages 18f and 49.

P. H. B.

● What Our Readers Say

"Please renew my membership in the Confessional Lutheran Publicity Bureau. Check for \$3.00 enclosed. I thank God for the work you are doing and the way in which you are doing it. Actually, whether you so intended it or not, you have taken over as the voice of true Missouri Lutheranism, and I would much sooner dispense with the *Lutheran Witness* or the *Concordia Theological Monthly* than to lose my subscription to the *Confessional Lutheran*. I am especially grateful for the articles on the Common Confession in the current (June) issue and for the evaluation of the Revised Standard Version in past issues. May I suggest that you approach Pastor . . . for a subscription."

— Pastor, Milwaukee.

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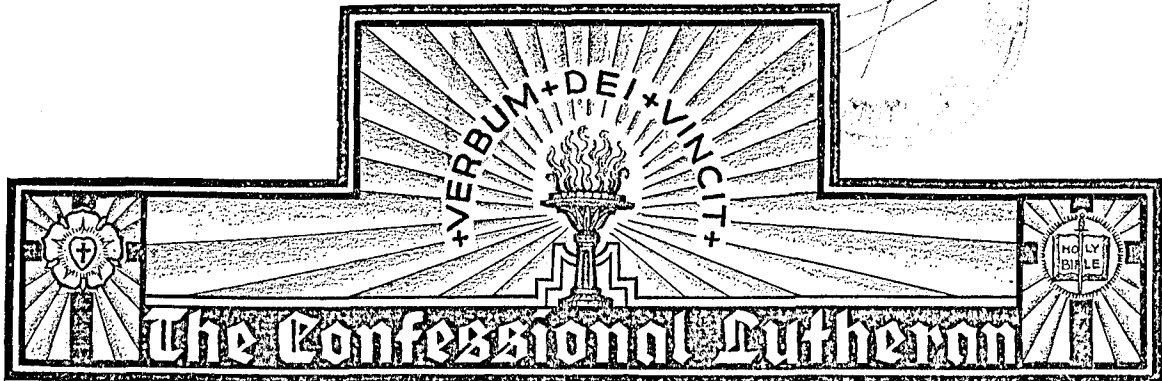
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MOTTO: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding aught of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

VOLUME XIV

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IN THIS ISSUE: The CONCORDIA SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER and the RSV — Getting Rid of Missouri's Scriptural, Lutheran Doctrine — A Postscript — A Famous "Unwritten Letter" — Contempt of Pure Doctrine — The Biblical Principle of Separation — Review of Publications — What Our Readers Say

⑦ The Concordia Sunday School Teacher and the RSV

By Edith Reinke

[EDITORIAL NOTE: The *Concordia Sunday School Teacher*, Junior to Senior Division, April-June, 1953, the Rev. A. C. Mueller and the Rev. Allan H. Jahsmann, editors, featured an article on "The Holy Bible — Revised Standard Version." We called the attention of our Sunday adult Bible class to the article and suggested that one of the members of the class might report on it. A member of the class, Mrs. Edith Reinke, offered to do this. Following are her notes, on the basis of which she reported to the class. The notes were not originally intended for publication. However, we felt that others might profit by her report, and so requested permission to publish her notes. We regret that we did not find it possible to publish them at an earlier date. The report is so arranged that the views of the *Concordia Sunday School Teacher* are

usually first presented, largely in direct quotation, after which the comments of Mrs. Reinke follow in parentheses. — P. H. B.]

In its article on the Revised Standard Version the *Concordia Sunday School Teacher* calls attention to the fact that this version has had a lot of publicity by its sponsors and that 1,000,000 copies were reported sold the first month after its appearance. (It seems to us that they should be able to report a much larger figure by this time. When its promoters do publicize the RSV, they choose passages from their translation with which a person can find little or no fault. Naturally this is to their advantage. In a contrary case they might have to expect to sell fewer of their Bibles.)

With reference to the Isaiah passage on the Virgin Birth the *Concordia Sunday School*

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Teacher says: "Since the revisers translated the Greek word in Matthew 1, 23 'virgin,' they should consistently have translated the Hebrew word in Is. 7, 14 as 'virgin.'" It also states: "The New Testament RSV differs so markedly from the Old, and there are in both Testaments so many hundreds of renderings which are found neither in the King James Version, nor in the American Standard Version." It suggests that "a committee representing conservative Christians should be appointed to weigh criticisms and deal with the revisers," and it states that "it may be hoped that the men responsible for the RSV will be willing to make changes that conservatives consider vital to the future of the revision." (This is wishful thinking.)

The *Concordia Sunday School Teacher* says: "It is too early to know whether the RSV will supplant the King James Version,

which is still so dear to Christians. But unless certain revisions are made, it is anything but likely that conservative church bodies will accept the RSV as their official version." The *Concordia Sunday School Teacher* also says: "We regret the theological bias of the revisers, which has prompted them to adopt renderings that seem to be aimed at destroying the doctrine of the deity of Christ and the vicarious atonement." (In many passages in which the doctrine of our Lord or some reference to Him is contained, these have purposely been left out. Either the RSV committee could not find them or something else has happened to them.) "On the other hand," the *Concordia Sunday School Teacher* says, "we do not believe that translations like 'young woman' in Is. 7, 14 will undermine the faith of the Bible reader in the virgin birth of Christ or in any other fundamental doctrine of Scripture." (I feel differently. I think it certainly would change things. And then other things concerning our dear Lord could not be believed either.)

Concerning the Old Testament of the RSV the *Concordia Sunday School Teacher* says changes run into the thousands. "One finds meanings which one did not find in the King James Version." (This is true, — because the text has been changed so terribly that a person has to get a different meaning to it.)

Concerning the New Testament of the RSV the *Concordia Sunday School Teacher* says that indirectly it contains "denial of the deity of our Lord," that it is guilty of other errors, and that "an earnest Christian cannot and will not tolerate error." (It is certainly true that the RSV has largely stripped our Lord down to a mere human stature. Should a "translation" which does this be considered "a good translation"?)

Concerning reasons for a revision the *Concordia Sunday School Teacher* mentions advances in Biblical scholarship. "We have learned much about the Biblical languages (Greek and Hebrew); scores of New Testament manuscripts have been found, and archaeological discoveries have thrown much light on the Bible." (Actually, what has been learned in this respect calls for no doctrinal changes in the Bible. But some people believe that, like fashions, the Bible should be changed every so often. The ownership of the Bible is not ours, to make changes as we please. There is only one who owns the Bible, our Lord. It is not for us to make changes of the kind that are made in the RSV. II Pet. 1, 20-21.)

A second reason for revision of our Bible which the *Concordia Sunday School Teacher* mentions is that some words in the King James Version are no longer in general use while others have changed in meaning. (This is true. But we know the meaning of the words of the King James Version and its style and beauty. If we didn't, we as Christians should make it a point to get to know them, get to a Bible class, or ask our pastor about them.) "During the last few years," the *Concordia Sunday School Teacher* says, "the complaint that the Bible is not being read because it is too hard to understand has become more and more insistent." (I think the Bible can be well understood. It is just that people sometimes don't want to take the time to understand it.)

In closing, the *Concordia Sunday School Teacher* says: "To those who ask, Shall I order a copy of the RSV?, my answer is a definite 'Yes.' In particular, Sunday school teachers who read the RSV and compare it with the King James Version will find their knowledge of the Bible increasing." (My answer to this is: *In which direction?*)

● Getting Rid of Missouri's Scriptural, Lutheran Doctrine

The Missouri Synod and the whole Synodical Conference have always taught, as Scriptural, Lutheran doctrine, that the pope is the great Antichrist in whom all of the many antichristian forces of the New Testament times have once and for all reached their climax. We do not at this time want to enter upon an exposition of this doctrine. We merely do want to show just now that this doctrine has actually been rightly taught and confessed by the Missouri Synod and the entire Synodical Conference, and that Missouri's present Presidium and the latter's Advisory Committee on Doctrine and Practice are now agitating its elimination from the doctrinal position of their synod.

The Position of the Synodical Conference

To cite but one of many testimonies from the more distant past, in 1893 the Lutheran Board of Education issued a symposium (published by the Lutheran Publication Society, Philadelphia, Penn.) on *The Distinctive Doctrines and Usages of the General Bodies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States*, — the former Iowa and Ohio Synods, the General Synod, the General Council, the General Synod in the South, and

the Ev. Luth. Synodical Conference. The distinctive positions of these various bodies were presented by "able and eminent writers" who represented their respective bodies. The position of the Synodical Conference was presented by Dr. F. Pieper. In his presentation of the distinctive doctrinal position of the Synodical Conference Dr. Pieper says, with regard to the doctrine of the Antichrist:

"Holy Scripture speaks of 'many antichrists' (I John 2, 18). As Christ alone is to rule in His Church by His Word, all false teachers setting forth in the Church their own doctrine instead of Christ's set themselves against Christ, attempt to cast off the authority of Christ and to overthrow His kingdom. Hence all false teachers are justly called antichrists. But the Scriptures speak of *one* Antichrist in whom the principles and spirit of the many antichrists are to culminate. This Antichrist, commonly called the *great* Antichrist and graphically described in the second chapter of the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, we believe to be the pope at Rome, the papacy. To this doctrine, so clearly stated in the Confessions of the Lutheran Church and once generally accepted by all Lutherans, exception is taken now. Modern theologians. . . . The papacy is the greatest possible foe of Christ and His Church, and all the traits which in II Thess. 2 are ascribed to the Antichrist, that he is to arise in the Church, exalting himself above all human authority, assuming to himself the prerogative of God, and sustaining these assumptions 'with all power and signs and lying wonders' — all these traits we find in the pope at Rome. Hence, we fully and heartily indorse the doctrine of the Lutheran Confessions, that the pope is the great Antichrist of whom Scripture has prophesied. . . . We do not, of course, hold, as we are frequently represented, that this doctrine of the Antichrist is a fundamental article of the Christian religion. For man is saved by knowing Christ, not by knowing and recognizing Antichrist. But what we hold is this: every Christian, knowing Christ well, will recognize the papacy to be the very Antichrist, as soon as he becomes thoroughly acquainted with the teachings and doings of Rome. Especially we hold those *theologians* to be rather poor theologians who, knowing the doctrine and practice of the papacy, fail to recognize it to be the true Antichrist." (Pp. 142-145.)

To cite but one testimony of most recent date, the Missouri Synod in its English centennial edition of Dr. Pieper's *Christian Dog-*

matics, Vol. III, published in this present year, 1953, speaks in a similar vein of "the doctrine that the pope is the Antichrist," p. 469. (Whoever may be interested in further references to the subject under discussion will find a considerable number of them listed there by Dr. Pieper.)

This is also the position confessed in the Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, Sect. 43, Of the Antichrist, and in Sect. 44 it is said of the doctrine there presented: "Not to be included in the number of open questions are the following: the doctrine of the Church and the Ministry, of Sunday, of Chiliasm, and of Antichrist, these doctrines being clearly defined in Scripture."

The Present Position of the Missouri Synod Presidium and Its Advisory Committee on Doctrine and Practice

What now, over against this position of the Missouri Synod and of the Synodical Conference, is the present position of the Missouri Synod Presidium and its Advisory Committee on Doctrine and Practice? This question is answered by reference to "A Report to the Praesidium of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod from the Advisory Committee on Doctrine and Practice, Aug. 15, 1951," sent to pastors of the Missouri Synod under date of January 25, 1952, over the signature of President "J. W. Behnken" with the following information (p. 3): "The Praesidium, upon receipt of the Committee's Report, gave careful thought and study to it and came to the conclusion to accept it, to make it its own." Referring to a memorial (No. 609) presented to the Milwaukee Convention of the Missouri Synod in 1950, this report declares: "We believe that there is no conflict in the positions of the Scriptures, the Confessions, the Missouri Synod, the ALC, Dr. Arndt, and the signers as far as identifying the Antichrist in the papacy. The conflict arises in holding that this identifying is a clearly expressed doctrine of Scripture, whereas it is not." (P. 15.) And again: "When it is stated that the pope is the Antichrist is a 'doctrine of Scripture,' the word 'doctrine' is not in harmony with Synod's definition." (P. 40.) The definition referred to (*Proceedings*, 1944, p. 250) reads: "A Scriptural doctrine is a truth contained in, expressed by, or properly drawn from Scripture."

How hopelessly the Presidium has in this matter involved itself in contradiction not

only with the Missouri Synod's Scriptural, Lutheran position, but also with itself, is clearly seen by a comparison of some of its own conflicting statements. In the ACDP Report under discussion it says (p. 14): "Scripture does not teach that the pope is the Antichrist." By acceptance of the so-called Common Confession it has, moreover, bound itself to the following declarations: "We pledge ourselves to teach all things taught in the Holy Scripture, and nothing but that which is taught us by God in the Holy Scriptures." (Part I, V: Means of Grace, 3.) And again: "We hold it to be an error to teach anything as a sign of Christ's second advent not promised or foretold in Holy Scripture." (Part I, XII: The Last Things.) Yet that same Presidium has by its acceptance of the Common Confession at the same time bound itself to teach as follows: "Among the signs of His" (Christ's) "approaching return for Judgment the distinguishing features of the Antichrist, as portrayed in the Holy Scriptures, are still clearly discernible in the Roman papacy, the climax of all human usurpations of Christ's authority in the Church." (Part I, XII: The Last Things, 2.) Is the Presidium speaking out of both sides of its mouth? Or is the above statement not meant to be understood as saying that the pope, the papacy, is itself the great and final Antichrist? Is it perhaps meant to be understood as meaning that the papacy is but one of numerous past, present, and possibly also future manifestations of the Antichrist in which his distinguishing features may be discerned? Is it supposed to be an open question as to whether in the future that is still before us, prior to the return of Christ, a special unfolding and personal concentration of the antichristian power already present now and thus a still more comprehensive fulfillment of II Thess. 2 may occur which may or may not be some individual pope, perhaps a secular ruler? (Cp. the *Declaration* to which the American Lutheran Church remains committed, VI, B, 1.)

Missouri Divided Against Itself

Here we again see how appeasement, concession, compromise in matters of doctrine in the interest of "union" works out. It "unites" a church to pieces. It is one of the causes of division in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod today. And this offense against the doctrine of the Antichrist is by no means the only one by which the Presidium is causing division in our church. The reader is referred, e.g., to the Presidium's direct attack on the

Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Missouri Synod with reference to the clearness of Scripture passages (the analogy of faith) concerning the conversion of Israel. (Cp. *Confessional Lutheran*, April, 1952, pp. 37-39.) And there are still other such offenses in the present Presidium's doctrinal repertoire, some of which we yet hope to discuss in these pages.

What are you going to do about this division and the offense of the Presidium which is causing it?

As for ourselves, thanks to infinite undeserved grace, we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. (II Cor. 13, 8.)

P. H. B.

● A Postscript

After our article "Getting Rid of Missouri's Scriptural, Lutheran Doctrine" had gone to the printer, the publication titled "A Fraternal Word on Questions in Controversy between the Wisconsin Synod and the Missouri Synod" came into our hands. Concerning the doctrine of the Antichrist one there reads (p. 9f): "This question is dealt with adequately in the Common Confession, Part I, Art. XII (2). The Antichrist has not only been revealed in the past, but is 'still clearly discernible' as the 'climax of all human usurpation of Christ's authority to' (this should, of course, read 'in' — P. H. B.) 'the Church.' 'Still' indicates that we hold to the position of our Confessions; 'climax' indicates that we look for no other fulfillment."

The last double statement is not taken from the Common Confession. It is merely an interpretation of the Common Confession by the Missourian authors of the pamphlet, "A Fraternal Word," which cannot impress us at all, because the ALC has always interpreted similar statements altogether differently. Compare, for instance, the Declaration (to which the ALC remains committed): "The answer to the question whether in the future that is still before us, prior to the return of Christ, a special unfolding and personal concentration of the antichristian power already present now and thus a still more comprehensive fulfillment of II Thess. 2 may occur" (according to the context this can mean *only*; that the papacy, which is

but *one of many* "antichristian manifestations in the history of the world and the Church"), "we leave to the Lord and Ruler of the Church and world history." (*Proceedings*, Missouri Synod, 1938, p. 225.) In other words, whether the pope is really the great antichrist is an open question to the ALC. There is nothing in the Common Confession which would forbid such an understanding of it.

The statement of "A Fraternal Word" that "The Antichrist has not only been revealed in the past, but is 'still discernible' as the 'climax of all human usurpation of Christ's authority in the Church'" could not possibly satisfy us even if it were in the Common Confession, because it would still leave unsettled the precise point of controversy, that is, whether the pope is for once and all the great Antichrist, also for the future still before us, as Holy Scripture teaches in II Thess. 2: "Whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and *shall destroy with the brightness of His coming.*" V. 8. Cp. also Rev. 20, 10 (the false prophet). However, the Common Confession does not even say what "A Fraternal Word," by its manner of using quotes, misleads one to think the Common Confession says. For the Common Confession does not say that "The Antichrist . . . 'is still discernible'" etc. What it does say is that "among the signs of His" (Christ's) "approaching return for Judgment the *distinguishing features* of the Antichrist, as portrayed in the Holy Scriptures, are still clearly discernible in the Roman papacy," etc. (Our emphasis.) The ALC has always recognized "the distinguishing features of" the Antichrist in the papacy, *but also in others*, not to speak of an assumed possible future personal "Concentration" of them in *some as yet unknown individual*. Here again the exact point of controversy is being wholly ignored. It simply is not true that the Common Confession has settled past controversy.

"A Fraternal Word" again shows the slovenly character of the work which is being done with reference to doctrinal differences between Missouri and the ALC. Far from allaying controversy, it is prolonging it. We cannot join ill-considered resolutions of agreement and Te Deums for this kind of thing. We shall have to reject "A Fraternal Word" along with the Common Confession.

P. H. B.

● A Famous 'Unwritten Letter'

Rev. Saul Paul
Independent Missionary
Corinth, Greece

Dear Mr. Paul:

We recently received an application from you for service under our Board.

It is our policy to be as frank and open-minded as possible with all our applicants. We have made an exhaustive survey of your case. To be plain, we are surprised that you have been able to "pass" as a bona-fide missionary.

We are told that you are afflicted with a severe eyetrouble. This is certain to be an insuperable handicap to an effective ministry. Our Board requires 20-20 vision.

At Antioch, we learn, you opposed Dr. Simon Peter, an esteemed denominational secretary and actually rebuked him publicly. You stirred up so much trouble at Antioch that a special Board meeting had to be convened in Jerusalem. We cannot condone such actions.

Do you think it seemly for a missionary to do part-time secular work? We hear that you are making tents on the side. In a letter to the church at Philippi you admitted that they were the only church supporting you. We wonder why.

Is it true that you have a jail record? Certain brethren report that you did two years time at Caesarea and were imprisoned at Rome.

You made so much trouble for the business men at Ephesus that they refer to you as "the man who turned the world upside down." Sensationalism has no place in missions. We also deplore the lurid "over-the-wall-in-a-basket" episode at Damascus.

We are appalled at your obvious lack of conciliatory behavior. Diplomatic men are not stoned and dragged out of the city gate or assaulted by furious mobs. Have you ever suspected that gentler words might gain you more friends? I enclose a copy of Dalius Carnagus' book *How to Win Jews and Influence Greeks*.

In one of your letters you refer to yourself as "Paul the aged." Our new mission policies do not envisage a surplus of super-annuated recipients.

We understand that you are given to fantasies and dreams. At Troas you saw "a man of Macedonia" and at another time "were caught up into the third heaven" and even claimed "the Lord stood by" you. We reckon that more realistic and practical minds are needed in the task of world evangelism.

You have caused much trouble everywhere you have gone. You opposed the honorable women at Berea and the leaders of your own nationality in Jerusalem. If a man cannot get along with his own people, how can he serve foreigners?

We learn that you are a snake-handler. At Malta you picked up a poisonous serpent which is said to have bitten you but you did not suffer harm. Tsk, tsk!

You admit that while you were serving time at Rome that "all forsook you." Good men are not left friendless. Three fine brothers by the names of Diotrophes, Demas, and Alexander, the coppersmith, have notarized affidavits to the effect that it is impossible for them to cooperate with either you or your program.

We know that you had a bitter quarrel with a fellow-missionary named Barnabas. Harsh words do not further God's work.

You have written many letters to churches where you have formerly been pastor. In one of these letters you accused a church member of living with his father's wife, and you caused the whole church to feel badly and the poor fellow was expelled.

You spend too much time talking about "the second coming of Christ." Your letters to the people at Thessalonica were almost entirely devoted to this theme. Put first things first from now on.

Your ministry has been far too flighty to be successful. First Asia Minor, then Macedonia, then Greece, then Italy and now you are talking about a wild goose chase into Spain. Concentration is more important than dissipation of one's powers. You cannot win the whole world by yourself. You are just one little Paul.

In a recent sermon you said, "God forbid that I should glory in anything save the cross of Christ." It seems to us that you also ought to glory in our heritage, our denominational program, the unified budget and the World Federation of Churches.

Your sermons are much too long for the times. At one place you talked until after

midnight and a young man was so sleepy that he fell out of the window and broke his neck. Nobody is saved after the first twenty minutes. "Stand up, speak up and then shut up," is our advice.

Dr. Luke reports that you are a thin little man, bald, frequently sick and always so agitated over your churches that you sleep very poorly. He reports that you pad around the house praying half of the night. A healthy mind in a robust body is our ideal for all applicants. A good night's sleep will give you zest and zip so that you wake up full of zing.

We find it best to send only married men into foreign service. We deplore your policy of persistent celibacy. Simon Magus has set up a matrimonial bureau at Samaria where the names of some very fine widows are available.

You wrote recently to Timothy that "you had fought a good fight." Fighting is hardly a recommendation for a missionary. No fight is a good fight. Jesus came not to bring a sword but peace. You boast that "I fought with wild beasts at Ephesus." What on earth do you mean?

It hurts me to tell you this, Brother Paul, but in all of my twenty-five years' experience I have never met a man so opposite to the requirements of our Foreign Mission Board. If we accept you we would break every rule of modern missionary practice.

Most sincerely yours,
J. FLAVIUS FLUFFYHEAD, *Secretary*
Foreign Mission Board

JFF/hmh

The above 'Unwritten Letter' first came to our attention in the *Christian Beacon* of July 10, 1952, where it was photographically reproduced from *The Baptist Bulletin* of June, 1952, which again had used it by permission as it originally appeared in *Famous Unwritten Letters* by Hendon M. Harris II, Taipei, Formosa, Executive Director of the Baptist Evangelisation Society (Independent). We are reprinting the Letter by permission of its publishers. While we cannot approve of all that is said in the Letter, it furnishes much food for serious thought, showing, as it does, some of the difficulties by which faithful pastors and missionaries are confronted when a church has gone "modern." *Famous Unwritten Letters* can be obtained from: Mr. Scott D. Porter (Treasurer, Baptist Evan-

gelisation Society), 4821 Homerlee Ave., East Chicago, Ind., @ 25c per copy.

P. H. B.

⊙ Contempt of Pure Doctrine

Nowadays any one who insists that pure doctrine is a very important matter is at once suspected of not having the right Christian spirit. The very term "pure doctrine" has been proscribed and outlawed. Even such modern theologians as wish to be numbered with the confessionalists, as a rule, speak of pure doctrine only in derisive terms, treating it as the shibboleth of dead-letter theology. If any one goes to the extreme, as it is held to be, of even fighting for the pure doctrine and opposing every false doctrine, he is set down as a heartless and unloving fanatic. What may be the reason? Unquestionably this, that modern theologians know full well that they have not that doctrine which in all ages has been called, and verily is, the pure doctrine. Furthermore, they even think that pure doctrine does not exist (is a *non-ens*), except in a dream-world, in the realm of ideals, in the Republic of Plato.

The time in which we live is that to which the apostle refers when he says of errorists that they are "never learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." 2 Tim. 3, 7. The spirit of our time is that of Pilate, to whom the Lord had testified that He was a King of Truth in a kingdom of truth, and who sneeringly replied, "What is truth?" John 18, 38. This unhappy man was most likely thinking in his heart that, since the greatest minds for thousands of years had vainly tried to find the answer to the question, What is truth? this poor beggar, this contemptible Nazarene, Christ, made Himself simply ridiculous with His claim that He was the King of Truth and would establish a kingdom of incontrovertible and eternal truth.

Contempt of the pure doctrine is contempt of the truth; for the pure doctrine is simply nothing else, absolutely nothing else, than the pure Word of God. It is not, as some think, the doctrine adapted to the systems of dogmaticians that has been accepted by the Church. Accordingly, contempt of the pure doctrine is proof that we are living in an unspeakably lamentable era. For listen in what terms the Scriptures themselves speak of God's Word and the pure doctrine. In the

prophecies of Jeremiah we read, chap. 23, 28: "The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath My Word, let him speak My Word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord." David addresses God Himself in these words of Ps. 94, 20: "Shall the throne of iniquity have fellowship with Thee, which frameth mischief by a law?" By the term "law" he refers, in general, to the Word of God. What says our dear Lord Christ Himself regarding this matter? In John 8, 31, 32 He says: "If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed; and he shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Over against this, German theologians are not ashamed to say: "Bah! We are seeking after truth, but only a conceited, self-satisfied person will claim to have achieved it." Such talk shows to what depths we have sunk. Does not the Lord say distinctly: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free"? Jude, the faithful apostle, writes in his epistle, v. 3: "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." The apostle is referring, not to faith in a person's heart, but to faith objectively viewed, that is, to the pure doctrine. John, the beloved disciple, the spokesman of love, writes, 2 John 9-11: "Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him Godspeed; for he that biddeth him Godspeed is partaker of his evil deeds." The holy Apostle Paul writes to Titus concerning the qualities of a Christian pastor, chap. 1, 9-11: "Holding fast the faithful Word as he hath been taught that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision, whose mouth must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake." In his First Epistle to Timothy, chap. 4, 16, he writes: "Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine; continue in them." Lastly, he writes to the Galatian congregation, after errorists had found their way into them, in chap. 4, 7-9: "Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth? This persuasion cometh not of him that calleth you. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." He means to say that a single false teaching

vitiates the entire body of Christian doctrine, even as a little poison dropped into pure water produces a deadly potion.

Let us picture to ourselves as vividly as we can the situation that would have been created in the early Church, when errorists like Arius, Nestorius, and Pelagius arose, if men like Athanasius, Cyril, and Augustine had not earnestly opposed them. As far back as in the fourth and fifth centuries the Church would have lost the primary article of the Christian faith; the foundation would have been removed from beneath it, and it would have had to collapse. That was, indeed, impossible in view of the eternal counsel of God concerning the Church; however, because of that very counsel, God had to raise up instruments such as those teachers were. True, while they lived, they were hated and persecuted as malicious disturbers of Christendom, but for more than a thousand years their names have been beacon-lights, as names of great witnesses to the saving truth, and in eternity they will shine as the brightness of the firmament and as the stars forever and ever. Dan. 12, 3. Let no one, then, be deterred from giving his testimony in behalf of the truth by the charge that he has a false spirit. That charge emanates only from unbelief.

Again, suppose Luther, after learning the truth, had indeed borne testimony for it to his immediate associates, but had not entered into conflict with the Papacy because of the great abominations which it had introduced into the Church, what would have happened? Christianity would have to remain under the soul-tyranny of the Roman Antichrist, and we all should still be subjects of it.

There is no question, then, but that both, yes, both these efforts are necessary: to defend the truth and to oppose every doctrinal error.

C. F. W. Walther, *Law and Gospel*,
Tr. W. H. T. Dau, pp. 348-351.

• The Biblical Principle of Separation

The Biblical principle of separation running from Genesis to Revelation in an unbroken thread is a teaching that needs no specific proof-texts. The entire Bible is the documentation of this principle. However, for clarification we deal with several texts, which, in principle, are relevant to our problem. (Many others could be cited such as I Tim. 6:3-5; II Thess. 3, 6; II Tim. 3, 5.)

[We would add Rom. 16, 17 as the chief passage. — P. H. B.]

II Corinthians 6, 14-15

II Cor. 6, 14-15 is a key text. "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness: and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" While the original context undoubtedly referred to the necessity of the early Christians being sharply separated from contemporary idolatry, the same reasons for their separateness, namely, to preserve a pure testimony and a godly life, hold good for us.

Furthermore, the basic issue then and now is the same. Idolatry worships a false god, as our modernists do. False gods are made of ideas as well as stone and wood. Growing out of this first century idolatry was a false philosophy of life which cut against the grain of first century Christianity. This is true today as between Christianity and modernism. Furthermore, that idolatry then led to atheism, as modernism in our day has developed atheistic humanism. This whole passage is profoundly theological and ethical in its sharp distinctions. To say that the early Christians should separate themselves from first century idolatry while modern Christians need not separate themselves from blasphemous apostasy is to reduce exegesis to a heap of rubbish. Such reasoning is not only erroneous but ridiculous. Modernism today rejects the God of the Old and New Testaments for another god. This is idolatry.

II John 9-11

II John 9-11. "Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him Godspeed: for he that biddeth him Godspeed is partaker of his evil deeds."

Here again the issue is theological and here again the ultimate remedy must be separation from such a person or group. Here again is the separative principle. In II Cor. 6:14, 15, God is saying that He will have no rival god. Here in II John 9-11 God is saying that He will tolerate no rival Christ, and that any believer who gives aid and encouragement to a false Christ participates in

the iniquity of it. Here is the definite prohibition against fellowship with, or support of, those who advocate a false Christ or a false doctrine of Christ. [We would say: a doctrine which Christ and His Apostles did not teach; that is, a doctrine which differs in any detail from any Scripture doctrine: Mt. 28, 20; John 8, 31f.; Eph. 2, 20. This, of course, eventually leads to another "Christ." — P. H. B.] This certainly applies to those false teachers, or apostate officials of one's own denomination as well as those of another fold. It insists that the pulpit must have one message, that the program of the Church must have one message; and that the missionary and denominational contributions to the Church shall preach one message, the Christ of the whole Bible. [We would simply say: the whole Bible, which Christ speaks of as His Word, John 8, 31f. — P. H. B.] The modern practice of conservative churches in preaching a true Christ from the pulpit while supporting the false Christ of modernism with their denominational giving is condemned. Such a church or individual, John insists, shares in the guilt of the apostasy. This conclusion is unavoidable if these words receive an honest interpretation. That the Christ of modernism today is a false Christ has been documented a thousand times.

Galatians 1, 8

Gal. 1, 8: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Here is the sharpest denunciation of those who preach "another gospel." Here it is implied that radical separation must be our relationship to such a one or group. Certainly the idea of withdrawal of fellowship is here explicitly taught, even to denunciation of those who preach such a false gospel. That the modernists of today are preaching a false gospel no real conservative questions. If so, then the conservative duty is clear — denounce such a one and refuse fellowship, regardless of denominational ties, denominational loyalties or personal friendship.

These three passages refer definitely to separation for theological reasons and the language is so sharp as to preclude any thought of fellowship between two such unlike persons or unlike groups. Separation from unbelief and infidelity (II Cor. 6:14, 15), separation from a false doctrine of Christ [Cp. above — P. H. B.] (II John 9, 11), and separation from a false gospel (Gal. 1, 8) is commanded. Those who deny the plain

meaning of these texts say by their exegesis and by their policies that it is all right for believers and unbelievers to be unequally yoked together, if they are in the same denomination or ecumenical group. They say by their exegesis and their policies that it is all right to contribute to the support of those who preach a false god or a false doctrine of Christ. They say by their exegesis and by their practices that it is all right to support and fellowship with those who preach another gospel. The objections of the modernists to the Gospel Paul preached has been documented a thousand times, but many conservatives will not denounce them, if they are in their own denominational household.

The Dilemma of Those Who Reject the Principle of Separation.

The dilemma of those who reject the principle of separation from apostasy is the awful conclusion that the Bible does not teach separation from apostasy, and the startling conclusion that God has not commanded His people to separate from those deniers of the faith who eventually produce the Antichrist and the apostate Church [both of which we have long since had to contend with — P. H. B.]. Those who deny separation from apostasy find themselves in a worse state than separatists [as they are wont to call those who practice Scriptural separation from apostasy — P. H. B.]: the dubious distinction of being in fellowship with the enemies of Jesus Christ and the Judases of the Gospel ministry. . . .

When the church has been well taught concerning these issues and the Biblical standards pertaining to them; when a reasonable time has elapsed and all protests have been without fruit and no abandonment of apostasy noted, then there is only one remedy for the church. The radical principle of separation must be applied, regardless of denominational ties, financial loss, or impairment of clerical prestige. The ultimate protest against apostasy must be separation from apostasy. The time and manner of this separation is relative, but the duty of separation is radical. The decision rests with the Christian conscience of the individual or the church, with the understanding that a true Christian conscience is one which reflects the teachings of the Word of God and the leadings of the Spirit of God. The conscience which disregards the Word of God, which claims the leadership of the Spirit in directions contrary to the Word of God is untrustworthy and anarchistic. Separation from apostasy is often costly for the individual or

local church, but the penalty of nonseparation from apostasy is to deny Christ, to share the guilt of the apostasy of our times. . . .

No organization is more orthodox than the leaders which it knowingly and voluntarily selects. . . .

Evangelicals who silently consent to apostasy make apostasy total.

Chester E. Tulga, D.D., *The Case Against the National Council of Churches*, pp. 51-54; 57; 58; 60.

⊗ Review of Publications

Faith of Our Fathers. Geo. O. Lillegard, Edit. 210 pages, 5½x8 in. Lutheran Synod Book Co., Mankato, Minn. \$2.00, postpaid.

Our Norwegian Synod brethren are this year celebrating the centennial of the organization of their synod and the 35th anniversary of its reorganization. The present volume is meant to serve as a memorial to the faith of their fathers and as a testimony to their contemporaries of that faith, which is still theirs today. Doctrinal and historical facts are here presented, and the presentation is a very timely one. There are biographical sketches of H. A. Preus, J. A. Otteson, and V. U. Koren. Three doctrinal articles by Dr. Koren enhance the value of the book immeasurably. An article on "The Great Divide" by the editor brings this section of the book right up to date. A significant statement from the editorial forward may here be quoted: "The true Church of Christ has never depended for its survival and continuance on the majorities within the visible church organizations but has time and again passed the torch of the pure Gospel on from generation to generation by the hands of despised minorities." Would that some prominent leaders and would-be leaders also among us and their followers might by divine grace yet learn this fundamental truth which is so richly documented in Holy Scripture and throughout the history of the Church!

We warmly recommend this volume to our readers.

P. H. B.

* * * *

The Case Against the National Council of Churches, by Chester E. Tulga, D.D. 60 pages, 5x7 inches; paper cover. Conservative Baptist Fellowship, 2561 N. Clark Street, Chicago 14, Ill.

This is another in the series of "little books on great subjects" to one volume of

which (*The Case Against Neo-Orthodoxy*) we have already called attention in a previous issue of our journal. The publishers and the author are Reformed fundamentalists. We cannot agree with everything they say, for instance when it is insisted (as it is also by the Signers of the Chicago *Statement* of the "44" in our own midst) that agreement on all points of doctrine is not necessary for confessional fellowship (p. 27. 26). Millennialism, in the form of "God's kingdom, the ideal social order under the rule of God" after judgment of the nations, is proclaimed on p. 30. The great apostasy predicted by St. Paul (II Thess. 2) is placed into the future yet before us, as is also the great Antichrist, pp. 36. 54. 57. However, this little publication does make an otherwise fine presentation of the subject announced in its title, the case against the National Council of Churches, the former Federal Council.

P. H. B.

* * * *

The Case Against the World Council of Churches. 61 pages, 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ x4 $\frac{1}{2}$ in., paper cover.

The Case Against Modernism. 61 pages.

The Case Against Modernism in Evangelism. 60 pages.

The Case Against Modernism in Foreign Missions. 64 pages.

The Case Against the Social Gospel. 64 pages.
The Case Against Communism. 61 pages.

The author of all the above books, uniform in format, is Chester E. Tulga, D.D. They are published by the Conservative Baptist Fellowship, 2561 North Clark St., Chicago 14, Illinois. The price of each book is 25 cents.

All of these books are written from the Fundamentalist point of view.

The first-named volume was out of print when this review was written, but was to be republished after meeting of the World Council of Churches in Evanston, Ill., in the spring of 1953. It tells of the formation and nature of the WCC. "This group believes what no prophet or apostle ever believed, that a united Church can conquer the world. It forgets that we once had such a Church and such a world, but its corruptions brought on the Reformation which the modernists have now abandoned in their trek to the new catholicism. The World Council of Churches, like the Federal Council of Churches, was formed as a vehicle for the social gospel, which aims at the socialization of the world

rather than the salvation of souls." (P. 10.) "The World Council has, in effect, become the religious front of socialism, which they fondly imagine to be a part of the Kingdom process." (P. 49.) These facts are well documented.

We shall let the second volume, on Modernism, characterize itself, by a few quotations. In pointing out that modernism has completely captured most of the older seminaries, Dr. Tulga rightly says: "The conquest began with a plea for inclusivism; it ended in most cases with the fundamentalists excluded from the seminaries which their people had built and endowed." (P. 7f.) Emphasizing that its real message is nothing but a social gospel, the author states, quite as correctly: "The social gospel was born and fathered by evolutionists and socialists, but with religious trappings to give it sanction." (P. 14.) An editorial, "Fundamentalism and Modernism: Two Religions," from the liberal *Christian Century* of January, 1924, which clearly points up the irreconcilable contradiction between these two systems of faith is given nearly in full on p. 57. The volume closes with the penetrating observation that "Modernism has no song, for it has nothing to sing about." (P. 61.)

Three quotations which Dr. Tulga adduces from other writers may serve to reveal the nature of the third volume, listed above, on modernism in evangelism. On p. 21 he says: "In spite of the fact that the social gospel doesn't work, the emphasis persists, with only a shallow emphasis upon individual conversion, and he quotes in proof F. Watson Hannan (*Evangelism*, p. 16) who says, "Rent problems, wage problems, work problems, sanitary problems, school problems, home problems, recreation problems, are all problems for evangelism, for in the last analysis they are all moral problems." On p. 49 he cites John R. Rice (*How to Have a Revival*, p. 91) in a scathing characterization of the modernist's "love" as follows: "Much that is labeled 'love' is really what an avowed modernist in one of his few lucid moments branded as 'a mush of concession.' It issues no challenge. It raises no cry. It draws no lines. It leads its victims to loaf and lunch with the sworn enemies of God without uttering a word of rebuke." And on p. 55 he again quotes Rice, this time from his *The Soul-Winner's Fire*, p. 83, as saying: "The pulpit has lost the confidence and respect of the world these days. In these days we have nice, soft-spoken preachers, who never hurt anybody's feelings, never offend anybody,

never cross anybody, never awaken anybody, never arouse anybody, and rarely save anybody."

Like the previous volumes, the next title, *Modernism in Foreign Missions*, is again well documented. Resisting the temptation to adduce numerous fine quotations, we shall call attention to the trenchant observation with which the book begins: "The main line of cleavage through Christendom no longer follows denominational lines." (P. 3.)

The last two books, *The Case Against the Social Gospel* and *The Case Against Communism*, carry forward the main theme of the preceding volumes.

We wish to state again that all of these books are written from the fundamentalist point of view, which does not insist on agreement in so-called non-fundamental doctrines, and which e.g. does not recognize the pope as the great and final Antichrist, and which leaves room for millennialistic hopes. All of this is particularly evident especially in the second last volume named. However, the earnest searcher will find in these volumes much valuable material on the subject of modernism, which is rampant in the work of churches everywhere today.

P. H. B.

⊗ What Our Readers Say

"The March-April issue of the *Confessional Lutheran* has received my careful perusal. This is certainly the best discussion of the New Bible that I have thus far read. I wish to give you my personal thanks for this fine work. Please enter my name as a regular subscriber for the *Confessional Lutheran*; and I would like to have the May issue. Please send me also two additional copies of the March-April issue. Enclosed find payment for all." — "The May issue of the *Confessional Lutheran* has reached my desk, and I have read the same very carefully. It is well written; but tells a very sad and tragic story. Thank you for the labor which you placed on this issue. I fear that my great mistake has been that I have made an idol of the Lutheran Church. I have set up this golden calf, and have said, 'These are thy gods, O Israel, which led thee out of the land of Egypt.' No doubt God is using this New Bible episode to open my eyes, and to show me the folly of my past attitude and conduct. May the Lord con-

tinue to bless you richly in your fine work." — Pastor, American Lutheran Church.

(EDITORIAL NOTE: The *Confessional Lutheran* has received hundreds of letters commendatory of its articles on the Revised Standard Version of the Bible. Also several letters finding faults with our testimony have been received. Excerpts from one of these follow. We believe that they should be very revealing to our readers in more than one important respect.)

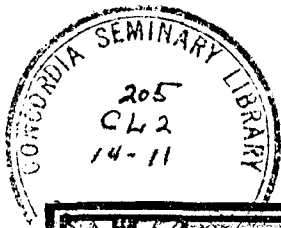
"I received the *Confessional Lutheran* and I would like to make a few comments. Does the Septuagint help to establish a pure text of the Old Testament? What I have read of it and compared with translations and commentaries makes me doubt that we have a pure text. It may help translators; who guarantees that it is the translation of a pure text? I think of the additions to Daniel and Esther, to mention just two. Fortunately most of the difficulties are words. The meaning can be gotten. But it makes it difficult to believe in verbal inspiration — whatever verbal means. . . . Did Matthew get Isaiah 7, 14 by inspiration, or was he inspired to quote? Since the Holy Spirit inspired Isaiah, why did He have to inspire Matthew once more? As for Isaiah 7, 14, let the scholars fight it out. As in every interpretation, it is one man's opinion against another. Why should yours be better than mine? In no other theological discipline does subjectivity play so great a role as in exegesis. Isaiah means nothing to me as far as the Virgin Birth is concerned. Matthew and Luke do. Without Matthew we would not even know that Isaiah is speaking of the Virgin Birth. The Virgin Birth did not occur from necessity, as some aver, but solely because it pleased God to send His Son into the world in this manner. He could have sent Him by a chaste married woman. A virgin isn't holier. Rome, of course, says that is horrendum. Let it . . ." — Very Respectfully, Rev. Wm. Engelke, Tipton, Kansas.

Still Available

Copies of the combined March-April-June issues of the *Confessional Lutheran* are still available. These issues contain our complete review of the Revised Standard Version of the Bible. Special prices for this thirty-six page publication are as follows: \$.35 per single copy; \$3.50 per dozen; \$25 per 100, all postpaid. Orders are to be addressed to: The *Confessional Lutheran*, 310 S. Cherry Street, Morrison, Ill.

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MOTTO: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding right of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

VOLUME XIV

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NUMBER 11

IN THIS ISSUE: Whoa Now! — How Missouri's Houston Convention Looked to the CHRISTIAN CENTURY — Attacking the Rule of Faith as Confessed by the Missouri Synod — "Theological Hairsplitting" — The Doctrine of Sunday in the American Lutheran Church — The ALC on Inspiration — The Importance of Agreement in the Definition of Terms — The Tools and the Structure — Part II of the COMMON CONFSSION Does Not Rectify the Shortcomings of Part I.

● Whoa Now!

How far men in leading positions within the Missouri Synod today have gone in undermining its Scriptural confession and thus destroying its real fellowship has been shown by A REPORT TO THE PRAESIDIUM OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH — MISSOURI SYNOD FROM THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE, AUGUST 15, 1951, and in a Letter of the Praesidium dated May 12, 1952, in which it seeks to defend its position as published in that Report.

In the ACDP Report it is stated concerning the Scripture passages which the Missouri

Synod adduces in its *Brief Statement* as the basis of its confession that "Scripture clearly teaches, and we teach accordingly . . . that there will be no general conversion, a conversion *en masse*, of the Jewish nation, Rom. 11, 7; II Cor. 3, 14; Rom. 11, 25ff.; I Thess. 2, 16" (Par. 42): "Evidently the passages are not as clear as the *Brief Statement* implies." (ACDP Report, p. 17.) Yet, in its subsequent Letter, dated May 12, 1952, the Presidium, attempting to defend this position in that report which it accepted and released to the clergy of the Missouri Synod as its own report, says: "All the members of the Praesidium subscribed wholeheartedly to the Brief

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Statement and have not in any way altered
 their subscription."

Evidently the Presidium not only believes
 that a horse can be ridden in opposite direc-
 tions at one and the same time, but it is in-
 sisting that this is moreover the only way to
 ride a horse.

Honest now — is it not highest time that
 members of the Missouri Synod as a body
 rise up and call a halt to this sort of thing?

The fate of our church rests on such
 action today, and the situation is such as to
 brook no delay. No organization can be more
 orthodox than the leadership which it know-
 ingly and voluntarily entrusts with or toler-
 ates in the high offices at its disposal.

May God give to each and all of the mem-
 bers of our hitherto singularly blessed synod-
 ical fellowship the grace to cry out against

this destruction which is now wasting it at
 noonday!

P. H. B.

How Missouri's Houston Convention Looked to the CHRISTIAN CENTURY

In reporting the Houston Convention of
 the Missouri Synod, the denominationally
 non-descript *Christian Century* emphasized
 its "new, modern, democratic, middle-of-the-
 stream position" as over against those within
 Missouri who want no change in its doctrinal
 position. The *Christian Century* says: "The
 only fireworks in the convention (fizzle
 would be a more accurate term) were
 provided by a tiny group of die-hard isolation-
 ists who just can't accept the new, modern,
 democratic, middle-of-the-stream position of
 their church." Referring to these "die-hard
 isolationists" as extremists, the *Christian
 Century* charges them with demanding of the
 convention: "Freeze all doctrinal positions."

Commenting on the report of the *Chris-
 tian Century*, the *Northwestern Lutheran* of
 our Wisconsin Synod brethren remarks
 (Sept. 20, 1953): "To the reporter in the
Christian Century and to the liberal theo-
 logians, whose cause that free-lance religious
 journal almost invariably espouses, that was
 an outlandish and ridiculous demand. What
 church in this day and age would want to
 freeze all doctrines when the increasing intel-
 ligence of man in keeping with the evolu-
 tionary process will soon have some better
 and more enlightened doctrines to offer? No
 doubt, the Missouri Synod would vehemently
 reject this imputation, but that is the way in
 which it is being interpreted by the *Christian
 Century* and also church papers of other Lu-
 theran synods representing the left wing of
 the Lutheran Church. The Roman Catholic
 Church freely and proudly admits that the
 doctrines are not frozen, that the pope has
 the right to promulgate new doctrines from
 time to time, which are just as binding as
 the doctrines set down in Scripture. How-
 ever, the true Lutheran Church, from the
 days of Luther, has always insisted that the
 doctrine is frozen. One of its outstanding
 principles has been: *Sola Scriptura*, that is:
 The Bible and nothing but the Bible. It has
 maintained that all doctrines have already
 been set for all time to come, frozen by God
 Himself in the Bible. And that is exactly the
 way Scripture talks. What else did Jesus do
 but freeze the doctrine when He said: 'The

Scripture cannot be broken'? What else is being done but freezing the doctrine when it is stated on the last page of our Bible: 'If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life'? If we ever reach that stage where we think that the doctrines of the Bible are in a liquid state, in a state of flux, subject to revision and modification by men, then we have started on the downward grade and have removed the only solid foundation from under the faith of men."

Neo-Missourians may not like too much this loud shouting and cheering from the side-lines by the *Christian Century* and others. They may be somewhat embarrassed by it for the time being. However, there it is. And its justice cannot be denied. Let us not forget that the net outcome of doctrinal discussions at Houston, the note on which the convention ended, was the question "What is a Doctrine?", which (admitting that the synod at its convention no longer had the answer to it) was referred for "study" and report to a future convention. Admittedly this question was asked because there are those who want to unfreeze such doctrines as that of the great Antichrist (the pope) and others within the Missouri Synod. A study of the union movement within Missouri and the "confessions" it has produced among us, from the 1929 Chicago Theses down to the Common Confession of 1950 will show — what neo-Missourians are reluctant publicly to admit — that the public confession of its doctrine is being unfrozen all the way through from that of the Holy Scriptures down to that of the Last Things. History shows that when a church has gone into reverse its progress is fast, — which is but another way of saying that things naturally run fastest when they run downhill. Missouri's present leadership is lending its weight towards setting the course of our church in that direction, and, under its guidance, the progress which our church is making is accelerating at an ever increasing pace. Why shouldn't liberals on the side-lines shout and cheer when they see what headway their own spirit is making in our Church?

Will we, Missouri, still accept the grace that will make us try this spirit and find that it is not of God? This is the question as Missouri faces her zero hour.

P. H. B.

● Attacking the Rule of Faith as Confessed by the Missouri Synod

In the last issue of the *Confessional Lutheran* we have shown that the presidium of the Missouri Synod is abandoning and subverting the Scriptural, Lutheran doctrine of our church that the pope is the great Antichrist. Another thing which the Presidium is agitating in this connection (under the doctrine of the Last Things) is toleration of the false teaching that there will in the future be a general conversion of the Jews. The Presidium would make room for this modern error in the fellowship of the Missouri Synod by attacking the analogy of faith as confessed by our church in the Brief Statement of its doctrinal position. While we have referred to this matter before (*Confessional Lutheran*, April, 1952), we feel the necessity of entering on a somewhat fuller discussion of it at this time.

By the rule of faith, that is, the rule of what we are to believe, we mean "the clear passages of the Scriptures themselves which set forth the individual doctrines," not some man-made system of doctrine, or some (mis) "interpretation" concerning them. (Cp. Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, Sect. 3.) Every Christian doctrine is clearly revealed somewhere in Holy Scripture. We refer to such clear passages as "seats" of any particular doctrine. The seat of the Scriptural doctrine of the Conversion of Israel is found in Romans chapt. 9-11. It is in its discussion of this doctrine that the presidium of our church has directly attacked the rule of faith as confessed in the Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

The Scriptural Doctrine of the Conversion of Israel

In Rom. 9, 1ff. the Apostle Paul begins a lamentation because of Israel's unbelief and perdition. He could wish that he himself were accursed from Christ for his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh, who had such a glorious past. He then goes on to say that the faithlessness of so many Israelites does not mean the frustration of God's promises. "For they are not all Israel which are of Israel." (V. 6.) A clear distinction is made between God's spiritual Israel and Israel according to the flesh. God had, and still has, "a remnant" of elect among the Jews. This remnant is really "all Israel" in

the spiritual sense of the word. This remnant was to be saved, while the rest of Israel was to be blinded in just judgment by God. (9, 27ff.) In chapter 11 this line of thought is continued. The gathering of God's Israel is to continue concurrently with that of the fulness of the Gentiles throughout New Testament time. "And so shall *all* Israel be saved." (11, 26.) In Rom. 11, 7 the Apostle writes: "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." In 11, 25 he says: "Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." Also II Cor. 3, 14 and I Thess. 2, 16 speak of this matter. Citing the last-named four passages, the Missouri Synod in its Brief Statement of its doctrinal position specifically rejects the notion "that before the end of the world a universal conversion of the Jewish nation (of Israel according to the flesh) will take place." It confesses: "Over against this, Scripture clearly teaches, and we teach accordingly . . . that there will be no general conversion, a conversion *en masse*, of the Jewish nation." The Missouri Synod moreover rejects this notion as a type of "the whole of Millennialism," that is, as something which is typical of that false teaching, — as the notion of a future general conversion of the Jews certainly is.

The Doctrinal Offense of the Presidium in This Matter

The Presidium of the Missouri Synod is now causing doctrinal division among us by insisting on toleration of what Missouri rightly rejects. In *A Report to the Presidium of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod from the Advisory Committee on Doctrine and Practice*, Aug. 15, 1951, accepted by the Presidium and made its own, it is said that we have no right to condemn the doctrine of the conversion of the Jews, as explained in their Report, as false doctrine. (P. 34.) The explanation of this doctrine found in this report (p. 15) is that "there would take place a general conversion of the Jews," that is, of Israel as a nation, Israel according to the flesh. The Presidium nowhere claims to have found anywhere in Scripture a clear passage which is supposed to teach a future general conversion of the Jews. Yet it does insist on condoning such a teaching, and in doing so it specifically rejects the doctrinal position which our Missouri Synod confesses.

Thus the Presidium has directly attacked our synod's confession of the analogy

or rule of faith in this matter, — that is, Scripture passages which the Brief Statement adduces for its rejection of the doctrine of a general conversion of the Jews. We quote: "Evidently the passages are not as clear as the Brief Statement implies." (P. 17.) There have in recent years been many veiled attacks on the Brief Statement of the Doctrinal Position of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. This is the first open attack on that confession of our church.

Over against the position of our synod in this matter, the Presidium has declared its agreement with Dr. Arndt, who says that "in this matter, the Presidium has declared its interpretation which is not without its difficulties." Neither Dr. Arndt nor the Presidium have revealed what they suppose the "question of interpretation" or "its difficulties" to be of which they speak. Those who teach a general conversion of the Jews commit at least a twofold error. First of all, they pervert the clear word "so" in Rom. 11, 26 — "and so shall all Israel be saved," explaining *the manner* in which, or in what sense, this is to be accomplished — so as to make it read *then*, that is, after the fulness of the Gentiles has come in (which, incidentally, would be at the end of the world!). And then they, in the second place, misinterpret the word "Israel" in the same passage, which has been clearly shown to refer to the whole of God's elect remnant among the Jews — so as to mean Israel according to the flesh, of *all Jews* as a nation. As though all of this were not yet bad enough, most of those who teach a general conversion of the Jews still commit a third error. They pervert the word "all" in the passage "and so shall all Israel be saved" so as to make it mean *not* "all," but only again a *part* of the Jews (which, by the way would furnish no contrast to the "part" which is being saved right along). This they do in order to escape the necessary conclusion of their false teaching that every Jew, dead or alive or still to be born, is to be converted some blessed day.

We do not at this time wish to enter still further into a discussion of the false teaching which the Missouri Synod Presidium would now condone in this matter. What we do want to do emphatically now is to point out the seriousness of the situation which the Presidium has caused among us, the doctrinal division which it is causing in our synodical

fellowship. Let no one permit himself to be blinded in this matter. Medical authorities tell us that most blindness can be prevented if it is but caught in time. The same thing is true, under God, in spiritual matters. On the other hand, how total such blindness can become, also in a larger church body, when such a body neglects its day of grace, — for that the Jews, the visible church of their day, who knew not what belonged to their peace in their day of visitation, furnish the most frightening example. God is still visiting us in grace. How long? Under God, the answer to this question lies with each one of us. For we are sanctified children of God, and as such God expects us to cooperate with Him, — using the means and the power which He freely supplies. In the fields of doctrine this means tolerance of nothing but the truth and the whole truth, and the rejection of every error.

Let each one of us, under God, help to set our synodical house in order before it is too late!

P. H. B.

❶ "Theological Hairsplitting"

"A person hears people speak about 'theological hairsplitting.' If it is Biblical doctrine, there can and should be no splitting whatsoever. If it is not a Biblical doctrine, the Church has no business to claim that it is."

Dr. J. W. Behnken, Presidential Address, Synodical Convention, 1953, Houston, Texas. (Cp. *Lutheran Witness*, July 7, 1953, p. 3.)

❷ The Doctrine of Sunday in the American Lutheran Church

In the publication, *A Fraternal Word* on the Questions in Controversy between the Missouri Synod, August 31, 1953, its authors (Drs. H. Harms, A. H. Grumm, A. von Rohr Sauer, and Profs. M. Franzmann and Paul Koehneke) on p. 10, under "G. Sunday" correctly present the issue as it concerns difference in the doctrine of Sunday between Missouri and Ohio, as follows: "a) Wis. Syn. Proceedings 1951, p. 135: The omission of any reference to this doctrine is criticized."

The pamphlet mentioned, on the same page, furthermore says concerning the whole controversy revolving about the Common Confession: "The Wisconsin Synod maintains that the adoption of the Common Con-

fession Part I 'involves an untruth and creates a basically untruthful situation . . . a settlement of past differences which are in fact not settled,' Wis. Synod Proceedings 1951, p. 147. The Missouri Synod should, therefore, 'repudiate its stand that the Common Confession is a settlement of the doctrines treated by the two committees (Mo.-ALC).' P. 147. This charge and this demand are based on the assumption that the Common Confession, Part I, is inadequate. Since, as we have shown, the inadequacy of the Common Confession, Part I, has not been proved, the charge falls and the demand cannot fairly be made."

Now, how has the publication, *A Fraternal Word*, "shown" that the inadequacy of the Common Confession, Part I, has not been proved, so far as it concerns the doctrines of Sunday? It merely says (p. 10): "It is public doctrine in the American Lutheran Church that the observance of Sunday does not rest on a command of God."

Does the committee which prepared *A Fraternal Word* really not know that such a statement does not show what it asserts to have shown thereby? The point of controversy between Missouri and ALC-Iowa has not been this that the latter body has taught that the observance of *Sunday* rests on a divine command. It has rather been, and still is, this: that it is public doctrine (doctrine publicly taught) in the ALC that we must keep *one day out of seven* (not necessarily Sunday), — a teaching which subverts the fundamental Scriptural doctrine of Christian liberty. That this has always been the issue can be seen e.g. from the Madison Theses of 1875, published as an appendix to the Iowa Synod Constitution in 1905, as found e.g. in Grosse's *Unterscheidungslehren* (1909), p. 21.

But this is not 1875, or 1905!

Well, then. A current publication of The Wartburg Press, Columbus, Ohio (1950), *Thine Forever, Daily Devotions Following Luther's Small Catechism*, Collated and Edited by August G. Suechting, brings the following public doctrine concerning the Third Commandment:

"The law of God decrees that one day in every week all men *must* cease their normal work and *must* worship Him.

"For a sound body, a normal nervous constitution, and peace of soul we need this day of rest and change. The adage coined by the wisdom of the ages might be paraphrased thus:

'All work and no rest
Makes wrecks of the best.'

"So our Father has commanded this way of life'."

(P. 41. Emphases in original.)

"On the sixth day creation was completed. The seventh day God rested from His creative activity. And He forever after designated that day as one of rest for man.

"What a boon the day of rest! Oh, the depth of wisdom that lies in this arrangement! 'Six days shalt thou labor.' The seventh is the Lord's day. On this day no work shall be done. In God's economy one day of rest is necessary for the building up of our physical energies, or the deepening of our spiritual life, for the enlarging of our social interests, and the discharging of our duties to our fellow men. This is truly the Lord's day. It belongs to Him. When we dedicate it to Him, He in turn pours out such blessings upon us that the days following become easier to live in, and our work is easier to do. The wisdom of God gave this day. Let not the foolishness of man overrule this wisdom!" (P. 110.)

The editor who collated the meditations in this book by various authors within the fellowship of the ALC for the publishing house of that body acknowledges Prof. T. S. Liefeld's work of editing, reviewing, and coordinating the manuscript. Prof. Liefeld, B.D., A.M., Th.M., D.D., is a member of the ALC's theological seminary faculty at Columbus, Ohio, and general faculty secretary of Capital University. (A review of the book we have referred to will be found in the *Confessional Lutheran*, June, 1950, p. 75f.)

As long ago as in 1929 it became evident that "union" committees had begun to pursue a wrong course in negotiations between Missouri and synods which in 1930 merged to form the ALC. "The omission of all historical data in working out the theses was evidently not conducive to a full understanding on the part of the colloquents." (Should be: "colloquists" — P.H.B.) "We must begin with the *status controversiae*." (*Lutheran Witness*, July 9, 1929, p. 231.) In other words, colloquists were evidently talking past each other, — as they demonstrably still are! In the Missouri Synod's *action* on the Report of that year's convention Committee on Inter-synodical Matters (No. 19), which was adopted, rejecting the Chicago Theses,

"1. It was emphasized that future discussion be contingent on the following two conditions: —

"a) That the move toward fellowship between the Ohio and Iowa synods, on the one

hand, and the Norwegian Lutheran Church, on the other, be first adjusted according to the Word of God;

"b) That future deliberations proceed from the exact point of controversy and take into account the pertinent history." (*Proceedings*, p. 113.)

The move toward fellowship between the Ohio and Iowa (and Buffalo) synods on the one hand, and the Norwegian Lutheran Church, on the other, *has never yet been "adjusted according to the Word of God."* On the contrary, right now, through the projected organic merger of these churches with in the American Lutheran Conference (together with two other churches of that group) *it is being more fully adjusted CONTRARY to the Word of God*, as the basic document, "United Testimony on Faith and Life," clearly shows. And as for Synod's decision "that future deliberations proceed from the exact point of controversy," we have again shown how an exact contrary course is being followed.

Let our committee on doctrinal unity really take seriously the two conditions on which the Missouri Synod in 1929 emphatically made future discussion *contingent*, and it will be the first to ask that the Common Confession be scrapped (to the glory of God!); indeed, it would in such a case in all honesty have to ask that negotiations be suspended until the condition so emphatically stipulated by Synod has been met.

Let members of Synod everywhere take Synod's action of 1929 seriously, and they will rise up like one man and ask that Synod rescind and repudiate the 1950 resolution of a majority at its Milwaukee Convention "That we rejoice and thank God that the 'Common Confession' shows that agreement has been achieved in the doctrines treated by the two committees" (Missouri and ALC).

Let the authors of the pamphlet *A Fraternal Word* follow out this resolution seriously, and they will cease offending our church and others by claiming that they have shown that "the inadequacy of the Common Confession, Part I, has not been proved." (P. 10.)

In a contrary case Missouri can only hope eventually to join a great host of churches of our day as a sect among sects, — truly Lutheran in name only; and, saddest of all, as one which once *had* the full truth of God's Holy Word, unadulterated and to the exclusion of all error and its toleration.

God help us in this great hour of need!

P. H. B.

● The ALC on Inspiration

When you are to reach agreement with those whose doctrines have differed from your own, you naturally must have a common ground on which to stand. If you are not agreed on what the Bible is, it is useless to discuss doctrines at all. For it will ever remain true, in the words of our Smalcald Articles: "The Word of God shall establish articles of faith, and no one else, not even an angel." That the ALC is not agreed with what the Missouri Synod has taught in the doctrine of Inspiration is evidenced in its official organ, the *Lutheran Standard* of Feb. 21, 1953. There, on page 15, will be found an article which discusses the so-called imprecatory Psalms (they are called "deprecatory" in this article, but the reference is to the imprecations which David offers).

In this article we are told that Psalms 53, 69, 109 are "out of line with the spirit of Christ." And why was it that the king of Israel could pray such a prayer? We are told that the believers of the Old Testament had only a limited revelation of God. This, we are told, also made for a limited morality, both in terms of knowledge and motivation. Then we are told that it is often characteristic of the Old Testament to identify evil with the person who committed it. (With whom else could you identify it?) Does not a Paul identify the person with the sin when he writes in 1 Cor. 16, 22: "If any man love not the Lord Jesus, let him be Anathema Maranatha"? And then we are told, at the close of the article: "To us, children of the New Testament, they (the imprecatory Psalms) must remain foreign in spirit. Here Jesus is our pattern."

Is this Missouri doctrine? If you will consult Dr. Engelder's discussion of this very question in his well-known book, *SCRIPTURE CANNOT BE BROKEN*, pages 237-243, you will not be left in doubt as to the answer. Under the caption, "*The Distorted Moral Sense of the Critics*" Dr. Engelder shows how people who speak thus about what has been recorded for our learning do not believe in God's holiness. "Their moral sense is not fully developed." Again he says: "Those who charge the executors of God's judgment with inhumanity (charging God, in effect, with ungodliness) have no sound ethical sense." Then Dr. Engelder goes on to quote with approval these words from McClintock and Strong's *CYCLOPEDIA*: "*The truth is that only a morbid benevolence, a mistaken philanthropy, takes offense at these psalms; for in reality they are not opposed to the spirit of the Gospel nor to*

that love of enemies which Christ enjoined. Resentment against evil-doers is so far from sinful that we find it exemplified in the meek and spotless Redeemer Himself, Mark 3, 5."

Finally Dr. Engelder points us to the real reason for this kind of false theology when he writes: "Because the sentiments in the imprecatory psalms are offensive to the moderns, they will not believe in Verbal Inspiration. Because we believe in Verbal Inspiration, we know that those sentiments express the mind of God; and while some of the expressions may seem too harsh to us, we bridle our thoughts. We know that, while now we see only through a glass darkly, the light of glory will reveal to us that every word of the imprecatory psalms is in full accord with the eternal Holiness."

The un-Scriptural attitude toward the Verbal Inspiration of Holy Writ which we find expressed in the ALC's official organ was voiced by Dr. Tanner of the ELC a few years back in the *Lutheran Herald*. [The same unbelieving sentiments regarding the imprecatory psalms and Verbal Inspiration are expressed in Dr. Tanner's book, *Exploring God's Word*, Augsburg Publishing House, 1950, p. 6f. — P. H. B.] May God preserve us from having this leaven spread in our midst. Regardless of what committees may say relative to doctrine, so long as false doctrine is permitted to be disseminated in their midst, they must be held accountable until it has been definitely rejected.

NORMAN A. MADSON, in *Lutheran Sentinel* (Norwegian Synod).

● The Importance of Agreement in the Definition of Terms

"Agreement of words is by no means a certain sign that there is agreement of meaning. The modernist, for instance, uses the term 'Christ' and means by it those ideals which he considers most God-like. The conservative uses the same term and means by it the second Person of the ontological Trinity. The meaning of terms is discovered by definition.

"Definition sets the limits to what we mean by terms. It is the medium that we must employ if we wish to let others know what is behind the words that we are using. We cannot know what a man's judgment is until we know how he is using his terms. It is the meaning of the words, therefore, and not the words themselves which are capable of being true or false." (Edward J. Carnell,

An Introduction to Christian Apologetics, 1948, p. 62.)

"Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, honored by the Federal Council of Churches with many years on its radio program, confirms what we have been saying, 'I believe in the divinity of Jesus with all my faculties if we can come to an understanding about what we mean by divinity.' Dr. Fosdick very properly insists, not upon agreement with the word, but agreement as to its meaning. He continues, 'If someone says, Well, we all have some of that divine spark in us; we all have some goodness, truth, love, and therefore on that basis the divinity of Jesus differs from ours in degree indeed, but not in kind. . . . To say therefore that God was in Christ seems to me no theological puzzle at all. I think God was in my mother, the source of the loveliness that blessed us there.' (*Hope of the World*, p. 103.)" — Chester E. Tulga, D.D., *The Case Against the National Council of Churches*, pp. 14-16.

The Missouri Synod, with the camel's nose of the processes of modernism now poked into its confessional tent, will do well to heed the above principle, — for instance with reference to the doctrine of Holy Scripture as set forth in the so-called *Common Confession*, and with regard to the doctrine of the Church as confessed in the *Brief Statement* over against modernistic Lutheran teaching, inclusive of that of the American Lutheran Church.

P. H. B.

● The Tools and the Structure Answering the Question, Are the Means of Grace or Their Use A Part of the Church — Its "Visible Side"?

A Simple Truth Simply Stated

"The means of grace are no more a part of the Church than the tools of the builder are a part of the structure."

The Abiding Word (Concordia Publishing House), Vol. I, pp. 271-272.

● Part II of the COMMON CONFESSION Does Not Rectify the Shortcomings of Part I

Why was a second part added to the Common Confession? The Common Confession was not originally presented to our synod as Part I. It was rather presented as a con-

fession which was supposed to show doctrinal unity between the American Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod. But numerous protestations, coming from the conservative wing of the Missouri Synod and from the whole of the Wisconsin and Norwegian Synods, pointed out deficiencies and contended that the doctrinal differences which have been in controversy between the Synodical Conference and the ALC are not settled in the Common Confession. These protestations have been so strong and so urgent that they could not be simply ignored. However, the authors of the Common Confession were firmly determined not to change anything in this document. So the best way to deal with these objections seemed to be an addition of a second part in which the stumblingblocks which are contained in the Common Confession might be removed. For this purpose Part II was added.

This second part of the Common Confession is a rather lengthy document, about twice as long as Part I. It deals mostly with material which has no bearing on the controversy, and therefore it does not serve to clarify the situation. It is rather burdensome to the reader, because it deflects his attention from the real issues. But there are a number of statements interspersed in this Part II which are evidently meant to neutralize the objections which have been raised against the wording of the original Common Confession. These scattered remarks are the main object of the present investigation. The question is: Do these insertions really accomplish their purpose? Do they clarify the dubious matter which is found in Part I? Do they set forth the truth and reject the error in plain, unambiguous terms?

The most basic difference between the ALC and the Synodical Conference is a different conception of the inspiration and inerrancy of the Scriptures. Let us therefore begin with this fundamental difference.

1. The Holy Scriptures

For over a century a heated controversy has been carried on among Lutherans within the German state churches on the question as to whether the whole Bible is the inspired and errorless Word of God, or whether it merely *contains* the Word of God, but also opinions of fallible men. Although the so-called vulgar Rationalism was overcome during the first half of the nineteenth century, the Lutheran Church in Germany has never fully recovered from the ravages of this

apostasy from the Christian faith. A more or less refined type of Rationalism stuck, and still sticks, to the theology of all German universities without exception. None of them has ever returned to the full purity and clarity of the original Lutheran Scriptural theology. Not only the liberal destructive branch of modern theology, but also the so-called positive Lutheran theology, so far as the universities are concerned, has never returned to an acceptance of the whole Bible as the inspired and errorless Word of God. Some have denied verbal inspiration (inspiration of words) and held that the Holy Ghost revealed the divine truth to the holy writers, but that these put down the revealed truth in their own words like other authors. Others have denied plenary inspiration (inspiration of the whole contents of the Bible) and restricted inspiration and inerrancy to those parts of the Bible which are concerned with Christ and His salvation, with Christian faith and life. But whatever belongs to the sphere of science, historical statements, geographical and astronomical remarks, in short, all secular matter, was not considered the inspired Word of God, but was put on the same level with mere secular literature, subject to error and fallacy.

The statements of Christ and His Apostles regarding the Scriptures (John 10, 35; II Tim. 3, 16, and others) were disregarded or misinterpreted. The fact cannot be denied that those modern Lutherans who confessed Christ as the only Savior at the same time dishonored Him, as a teacher who had faulty, obsolete ideas regarding the Holy Scriptures. They dishonored the Apostles, as witnesses who lacked the proper insight into the true nature of inspiration.

In our country the older Lutheran synods were from the very beginning largely under the influence of German modern theology. But the synods belonging to the Synodical Conference and even the Iowa Synod at the beginning of the present century still confessed the old Lutheran doctrine of the inspiration and inerrancy of the whole Bible. Of these church bodies the Iowa Synod was the first which began to make concessions to the spirit of modernism and to treat differences in the doctrine of inspiration as differences not divisive of fellowship. This was done not only because the Iowa Synod officially maintained fraternal relations with German Lutheran churches in which the Lutheran doctrine of inspiration was discarded, but also because many members in its own midst had accepted the modern view of a

partial inspiration of the Bible. The Ohio Synod, after its merger with Iowa, also gave up its former sound and staunch position in the doctrine of inspiration. There is now no difference anymore between the Ohioan and Iowan wing of the American Lutheran Church when it comes to the question as to whether the whole Bible is the inspired and errorless Word of God or whether this is true only of those parts of the Bible which deal with Christian faith and life.

For the Missouri Synod the hour of decision has now come as to whether or not it will definitely open the door to the modernistic conception of the Holy Scriptures in its midst. The Common Confession, as we shall presently see, offers such a door.

Three Things to Remember

Before we enter into an examination of this document, three points of basic importance must be clarified. In the first place, the question is not: What has been the position of the ALC in former years? It is generally known that this church body has taught and defended the modern view of the Bible, that is, the idea that not the whole Bible is the inspired and errorless Word of God, but only those parts of the Bible which deal with our Christian faith and life; that statements contained in the Bible which deal with other, secular matters are not written by inspiration, but are to be considered as words of fallible men and therefore contain, or may at least contain, errors. Since it is a matter of general knowledge that this modern view of the Bible has been officially taught within the ALC, we need not waste any time by repeating quotations. Nor has there been any indication in publications of the ALC that this church body has in the meantime changed its position.

But now the leaders of our Missouri Synod tell us that they have thoroughly discussed this difference with members of the ALC and that they have found that our former opponents have *changed* their position. Our leaders now assure us that the ALC with us accepts the whole contents of the Bible as the divinely inspired Word of God and therefore as the errorless divine truth. The only proof which they attempt for this astounding information is the wording of the Common Confession regarding the Holy Scriptures. The question which is to be answered therefore is this: Does the wording of the Common Confession regarding the Scriptures really prove that the ALC has changed its position and that it now with us

accepts the whole Bible as the inspired and inerrant Word of God?

The second point which we must understand and keep in mind if we do not want to be deceived is the fact that modernistic Lutherans naturally employ a different terminology from ours. A change of doctrine is unavoidably followed by some altered mode of expression. We are used to identifying the terms "Bible, Holy Scripture, the Word of God." When we say "the Holy Scriptures," or hear this expression, we instinctively connect with it the other term, "the Bible." It does not occur to us at all that the words "Holy Scripture" could have any other meaning. But it is different with modernists who hold that the Bible is only partly the inspired Word of God and partly the word of fallible men. Can they call those parts which in their estimation are merely human opinions "the Word of God"? Can they include them in the words, "the Holy Scriptures"? It would be stupid and even deceitful on their part to call those portions of the Bible in which they see only fallible words of men "Holy Scripture" or "the Word of God." And still they also use these terms. But they have in mind only those parts of the Bible which are concerned with Christ and His salvation, with our Christian faith and life, but not those parts which deal with secular matters.

The third thing which must not be overlooked is the fact that modern Lutherans, in their presentations of Christian doctrine, no longer give the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures its natural place of honor as the source and norm of all Christian doctrine at the head of the whole presentation, but prefer to treat the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures incidentally under the caption "Means of Grace" together with Baptism and the Lord's Supper. This arrangement permits modernists to disregard completely those portions of the Bible which in their opinion are not the inspired Word of God, but merely words of fallible men. Speaking of "Holy Scripture" merely as one of the means of grace, they may restrict their statements to those parts of the Bible which they also acknowledge as means of grace and the inspired Word of God because they deal with Christ and His salvation, with our Christian faith and life. The troublesome question about parts of the Bible which modernists do not accept as the inspired Word of God is by this arrangement eliminated from the very start. The view is focused on the Bible insofar as it deals with our Christian faith and life only.

Now — The Common Confession

Keeping these three things in mind, let us now examine the Common Confession and see if its wording really proves the assumption that the American Lutheran Church has given up its modernistic conception of the Bible and that it now with us accepts the whole Book as the inspired Word of God.

The first feature in this matter to strike the eye is the fact that the Common Confession does not treat the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures at the head of the whole document, not as the most fundamental doctrine, in a separate chapter, but, together with other doctrines, under the heading "Means of Grace."

This is in itself an unwarranted concession to modernism. Why open this loophole to modernism right in the beginning when dealing with men who have publicly asserted and defended the error of modern Lutherans that the Bible is partly the inspired Word of God and partly the fallible word of men? The question to be settled between the American Lutheran Church and the Missouri Synod is this: Is the whole Bible the inspired errorless Word of God, or is this true only of certain parts of it? The superscription of Article V of the Common Confession beclouds the very issue and certainly does not prove that the ALC has changed its position.

But let us see what the Common Confession has to say about the Bible. It says: "Through the Holy Scriptures, which God caused to be written by men chosen and inspired by Him, God instructs and assures us regarding His will for us." Remember that the burning question between us is this: Is the whole Bible the inspired Word of God, or is this true only of those parts in which God tells us about our salvation through Christ, — which are a means of grace? The Common Confession informs us that God in the Holy Scriptures instructs and assures us regarding His will for us. No answer is given so far to our question.

The Common Confession goes on: "The Holy Scriptures constitute His Word to men, centering in the salvation of Himself in the person and work of Jesus Christ for our salvation." In which sense is the term "the Holy Scriptures" here used? As identical with "the Bible," or in the modern sense, as a comprehensive term for what God has revealed to us regarding our salvation through Christ? The Missourian representatives no doubt meant it as identical with the term "the Bible" and took it for granted that the ALC representatives did the same. But

did they? The remark that God's Word to men is "centering in the revelation of Himself . . . in Christ" in this connection reminds us of the fact that modernists like to recommend their partial acceptance of the Bible to us as the true "Christ-centered view of the Scriptures." It is true that the whole Bible is centered in Christ and His salvation, but it is a misuse of this truth when modernists try to cloak their rejection of large portions of the Bible with this expression. The insertion of this remark certainly does not prove that the ALC now with us accepts the whole Bible as the inspired Word of God. It should rather caution us to weigh every word carefully.

Finally, the Common Confession says of the Scriptures: "Through the Holy Scriptures God continues to speak to men in all ages until the end of time. He speaks as the infallible and unchanging God, whose message to mankind never changes. Since the Holy Spirit by divine inspiration supplied to the holy writers content and fitting word, therefore we acknowledge the Holy Scriptures in their entirety as the inspired Word of God." Again we ask: Is all of this stated of the whole Bible, or only of those parts of the Bible which modernistic Lutherans still acknowledge as the inspired Word of God and therefore "Holy Scripture"? The term "the Holy Scriptures in their entirety" proves nothing as long as it is not clear in which sense it is used. The statement that "the Holy Spirit supplied to the holy writers content and fitting word" is taken from the Pittsburgh Agreement, which notoriously does *not* confess the verbal and plenary inspiration of the Bible.

In order to prove that the ALC has changed its modernistic view of the Scriptures and that it now with us accepts the whole Bible as the inspired and errorless Word of God it would have been necessary to add a paragraph indicating that *not only* what the Bible says about Christ and His salvation, *but also* historical, geographical, and other secular matters contained in it are the inspired, inerrant truth. This remark, contained in the Brief Statement, has always been a rock of offense to the ALC. Since not a trace of it is to be found in the Common Confession, but each word of it may be accepted by modern Lutherans in their sense, it must be said that this document offers not the least proof for the assumption that the ALC has changed its modernistic view of the Bible and now acknowledges the whole Bible as the inspired and errorless Word of God.

The Common Confession — Part II

We now come to the great question: Does Part II of the Common Confession remedy this deficiency of Part I regarding the Holy Scriptures? In the chapter on "The Church and Education," p. 21, par. 2, the statement is inserted: "The Holy Scriptures are God's verbally inspired Word, that is, God moved men to write what He wanted recorded in the words which He wanted employed. They alone constitute God's inerrant Word to men", etc. These words are supposed to clinch the argument and to prove that the ALC with us really confesses the verbal inspiration of the whole Bible, including so-called minor matters. "The Holy Scriptures are God's verbally inspired Word." This statement may *sound* as though it meant to say that the whole Bible is verbally inspired, although it does not *say* so in so many words. But this statement is followed by an explanation which tells us exactly what it means. Does it mean that everything in the Bible is divinely inspired? It says: "God moved men to write what He wanted recorded in the words which He wanted employed." "*What He wanted recorded*"! But what did God want recorded in the Bible? Everything that is written in the Book, or only those things which pertain to Christian faith and life? No answer is given to this question. And after the door is thus left open to the modern idea that God wanted only those things recorded which refer to our salvation, that they alone are inspired, the words follow: "They alone constitute God's inerrant Word to men. They alone are 'able to make' men 'wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.' II Tim. 3, 15. They alone train men in holy living. 'All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works,' II Tim. 3, 16-17." Does not the quotation of this Scripture text in *this connection* create the wrong impression as though St. Paul did not mean the whole Bible by the words "all Scripture," but those things only which refer directly to Christ and His salvation? Those who misuse II Tim. 3, 15-17 to cloak their restriction of the term "Holy Scripture" to certain parts of the Bible forget that the same Apostle Paul in Rom. 15, 4 wrote without restriction "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Things written in the Bible

which may seem to be irrelevant may nevertheless contain an important truth. For a long time German liberal theologians have ridiculed Lutherans who accepted I Tim. 5, 23 as divinely inspired. This passage certainly does not refer to our salvation through Christ, nor is it meant as a rule for our Christian life, but it is meant simply as a salutary expedient for Timothy. St. Paul admonishes him not to drink water only, but to use a little wine. In our time and especially in our country this very text is a powerful weapon against fanatical total abstainers who condemn every use of liquor under any conditions as sinful. Also this text, although not speaking of Christ and His salvation nor of our Christian faith and life, is written for our learning. But what the Common Confession, Part II says of the Scriptures leaves us completely in the dark regarding the question: Is the whole Bible the inspired Word of God, or is this true only of those parts which have reference to our Christian faith and life? The wording of Art. VI, Par. 2 is a clever way of veiling and avoiding the issue. Far from rectifying the shortcomings of Part I, therefore, the wording of Part II rather corroborates and endorses the evasive manner in which the basic difference regarding the inspiration and inerrancy of the Scriptures are treated in Part I.

Once a loophole is left open for those who do not accept the whole Bible as divine revelation, even the expression "God's verbally inspired Word," which is used in this connection is of no consequence. This expression was and is used against such modernists as teach merely an inspiration of the subject-matter contained in the Bible, as though the holy writers had set forth in their own words the truths which the Holy Ghost revealed to them. Over against their error, the term "God's verbally inspired Word" is of importance. But when large sections of the Bible are excepted from inspiration, what difference does it make whether the rest is said to be inspired verbally or only materially? The Bible is in that case no longer the Word of God, but merely *contains* partly the Word of God and partly the word of fallible men.

When the Brief Statement asserts that the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God because they are given by divine inspiration, it speaks, as we all know, of that Book which is generally known as "the Bible." This is clearly shown by the fact that the Brief Statement expressly includes the whole contents of the Bible, also those parts which treat of historical, geographical, and other secular

matters, as the infallible truth and that it rejects the modernistic view of the Bible as "a horrible and blasphemous error, since it flatly contradicts Christ and His holy Apostles." This is plain language which every Christian can understand. But this very passage of the Brief Statement has always been offensive to the ALC. One such remark as just quoted, inserted in the Common Confession, would alter the whole character of this document. Try to add the words of the Brief Statement to the Common Confession, and the ALC will reject them.

On the other hand, accept the words of the Common Confession, Part I and Part II, as they read, and you will overthrow the Brief Statement; for these two confessions disagree with each other.

Just think of it! A clear and true confession which has been repeatedly accepted by the Missouri Synod by *unanimous vote* and which is approved also in our sister synods, nullified by a hazy declaration which cannot be accepted but by a mere majority vote of one of the constituent synods of the Synodical Conference, because a minority in the Missouri Synod itself, and the whole of the Norwegian Synod, and the Wisconsin Synod will never accept it as their own confession.

Don't be deceived. Liberal elements within the Missouri Synod which now still pay some heed to the Brief Statement would have to be expected openly to come out with their modernistic view of the Bible as soon as the Common Confession were definitely accepted, — if that ever came to pass, which God forbid! They could then with a show of right say that they still accept the Brief Statement, but "in the light of the Common Confession." Everyone knows what that means. It means "revised by the Common Confession."

Right now the Missouri Synod stands at the crossroads. May God graciously open the eyes of all faithful members of it before it is — too late!

J. B.

(To be continued)

**EVANGELICAL DISCIPLINE MUST
PREVAIL WITHIN THE MISSOURI
SYNOD**

**THE ERRORS OF SIGNERS OF THE
"STATEMENT" OF THE "44"**

MUST BE REJECTED

**THE "LUTHERAN WITNESS" MUST
BE RESTORED AS THE VOICE OF
THE MISSOURI SYNOD**

**THE "COMMON CONFESSION"
MUST BE REPUDIATED**

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MOTTO: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you: but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." — 1 Cor. 1, 10.

"We have no intention of yielding aught of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquility, and unity (which, moreover, is not in our power to do). Nor would such peace and unity, since it is devised against the truth and for its suppression, have any permanency. Still less are we inclined to adorn and conceal a corruption of the pure doctrine and manifest, condemned errors. But we entertain heartfelt pleasure and love for, and are on our part sincerely inclined and anxious to advance, that unity according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God uninjured, nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered, no room is given to the least error, poor sinners are brought to true, genuine repentance, raised up by faith, confirmed in new obedience, and thus justified and eternally saved alone through the sole merit of Christ." — Concluding Statement of the Formula of Concord concerning the Requirements of Confessional Fellowship among Lutherans of the Augsburg Confession. Trigl. Conc., p. 1095.

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☉ Proper Procedure Against False Teaching

"If, in a church fellowship, one arises who preaches false doctrine and tries to introduce it into the church, love to the Lord, love to the Church, love to the errorist himself must drive the rest of the members to testify, and, when testimony and admonition are fruitless, to exclusion of the same, according to the declaration of St. Paul: 'Put away from among yourself that wicked person.' (1 Cor. 5, 13.) If, however, it is the case that a whole church fellowship should take a false position in doctrine and wanted to tolerate and cling

to error in doctrines of faith, then the individual member in this communion who has a better knowledge must reprove not only the false teachers but also the whole communion, also if it should expel him therefor, as the Roman Church did Dr. Luther and the Jewish synagog did the Apostle Paul. If such an erring communion or synod indeed submits to hearing testimony against its false position but does not better itself and do away with what is wrong, then the one concerned must himself step out, *first*, because of the *evil appearance* which he would otherwise give; *secondly*, because of the *danger* to which

might pour out its final wrath and persecution over us, the more we are in need of being fully grounded and strengthened in this knowledge, that we learn to beware of it; and accordingly I hold this to be a certainty, that whoever does not recognize the papal kingdom as the kingdom of the Antichrist, such a one does not yet stand so firmly but that he may be misled to it by this or that seduction; whoever finds himself in his heart convinced concerning it, however, such a one will be pretty safe from apostasy.' Again: 'We can to please the papacy let go of no article of our faith, which would mean to become unfaithful to the truth itself, one part of which is connected with another. So we cannot give up or leave this part of our doctrine, that the pope is the Antichrist, in whose recognition (after others also had already long before that declared him to be such) the Reformation has strengthened us and we dare not rightly step back.' Again: 'It is a point of doctrine which is not merely now and then taught by our Christian and zealous theologians in their private writings, but which is also expressly to be found in the Smalcald Articles (Part II, Art. IV, p. 307), which belong to our Symbolical Books and are a part of our Church's common confession, namely, — that the Roman pope (whereby is meant indeed not his person in itself so much as, without excluding him, the dignity and exaltation which he arrogates to himself, according to which he is supposed to be the visible head of the Church and everything in it is supposed to depend on him) is the true, real, great Antichrist prophesied in II Thess. 2, 3-8. So then our common doctrine concerning this matter is this, that the Roman See and whatever and inasmuch as it is attached to it, to which belong especially the Roman clergy as associates in that kingdom, is that antichristian kingdom which is most opposed to the Kingdom of Christ in the last times, in which the reigning Roman pope at any given time is the head and together with those whom he has about him rules over the rest.' (*Righteous Zeal against the Antichristian Papacy*, p. 63. 282. 308.) Dannhauer declares: 'Either no Antichrist will come into the world, or he it is who rules at Rome, and in whom all characteristics of Antichrist are found.' Adam Osiander stated in his day: 'Also the present pope is, and is called, Antichrist. The reason why he is this lies not in some personal depravity or wickedness, but in the nature of his office. Now, no pontiff as such, however upright he has been personally, has failed to declare himself the ecumenical head of the Church, or has

not exercised authority in secular and spiritual affairs, or has not approved the condemnatory canons of the Council of Trent, though he may, for political reasons, abstain for the time being from slaughter and tyranny.'

"... The reason why modern Lutherans and others deny that the pope is the very Antichrist is because they do not know what the Gospel, and hence, what Christ really is. Whoever does not understand these things will never discern the Antichrist predicted in Scripture."

W. H. T. Dau, *Christian Dogmatics*, II, pp. 180-182.

③ The Chiliastic Teaching of a General Conversion of the Jews

"With the chiliastic teachings must be grouped the claim that there will be a general conversion of the Jews to Christianity before the Judgment Day. The Scripture passage cited to substantiate this claim is Romans 9, 25ff.; 11, 25. 26, where the Apostle says: 'Pas Israäl soothäsetai,' 'all Israel shall be saved.' Chiliasts understand the term 'Israel' in this text as meaning the Jewish nation. The correct way to meet this error is to hold the claimants to the clear wording of the text. The text says 'all' Israel shall be saved. This does not mean a considerable number, or the great majority, or nearly the entire number of Israelites, but each and every Jew shall be saved. Moreover, if Israel in this refers to the Jewish nation, the Apostle's statement must be made to apply not only to Jews who were living at that time, or who might live before Christ returns, but also any Jew that had lived in past ages. This text, then, would teach absolute universalism, so far as the Jews are concerned. It would be impossible for any Jew to be lost, if 'Israäl' means the Jews. The defenders of the idea of a universal or general conversion of the Jews have felt that this understanding of the text, — which, however, is the only correct one if Israel here means the Jews, is more than they are willing to sponsor. Hence, they have interpreted 'pas' to mean 'bene multi,' Baier: ziemlich viel. But it is easy to defeat this interpretation. 'Pas' simply does not mean 'quite a number,' but 'all.' If people who cite this text for their chiliastic view will not stick to the text, they sacrifice their right to cite the text at all for their view.

"But what does the text say in reality, when properly understood? Israel, in the

Apostle's parlance, especially in Romans, is often the spiritual Israel, the sum total of the believers in Christ, or of the elect, so far as these come from among the Jews, whom the Apostle has also called 'ta tekna tās eppangelias,' Rom. 9, 8. The counterpart of 'pas Israäl' thus understood is 'to plärooma toon ethnoon,' which does not mean the absolute numerical totality of all Gentiles, but the sum total of the elect from the Gentiles. In this sense 'pas Israäl soothäsetai' is a perfectly correct statement. Every believing Jew certainly will be saved. The Apostle also shows in v. 25 how this is to be done. 'Blindness,' he says, 'is happened to Israel in part,' that is, there are always some Jews who come to see the truth as it is in Jesus. While the fullness of Gentiles is entering the broad Gospel portals of the New Testament, it happens, especially through the Christian missions to the Jews, that some Jews here and there have their eyes opened. 'And thus,' 'kai houtos,' says the Apostle, 'all Israel shall be saved,' i.e., by the Gentiles and the Jews being converted, God attains His elective purpose of saving, 'all Israel,' viz., the entire Israel of the Spirit, all true believers.

"The deleterious effects of chiliasm are seen also at this point. For the advocates of the idea of a general conversion of the Jews before Judgment Day do not accelerate but impede the conversion of the Jews that ought to be going on now. They turn the eyes of the Jews and of many Christians, who should help the Jews, away from the Gospel which saves, and cause them to dream about some mysterious event in the future, when the wholesale conversion of the Jews will occur like a *deus ex machina*, with a wonderful eclat.

"Luther . . . Walch, XX, 2529f. . . . VI, 1410."

W. H. T. Dau, *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. II, p. 187f.

☉ A Hallucination Which Haunts Enthusiasts of the COMMON CONFESSION

"Melancthon fell into a hallucination by which his own peace of mind was wrecked, his Christian consistency seriously compromised, the spirit of partisanship developed, the Church distracted and well nigh lost. This was the hallucination that peace could be restored by ambiguous formulas, accepted indeed by both parties, but understood in different senses. It is a plan which

has often been tried and which never succeeds where men are in earnest. It not only does not bind men more closely, but leaves them more widely alienated, more full of bitter distrust. Men must be honest in their difference, if they are ever to be honest in their agreement."

C. P. Krauth, *The Conservative Reformation and Its Theology*, p. 290.

☉ Has A FRATERNAL WORD Actually "Shown" That the Common Confession Is Adequate?

Objective Justification

In its attempt to defend the Missouri Synod, more specifically its leadership, against the charge of having "disrupted the Synodical Conference," *A Fraternal Word* says: "The Wisconsin Synod maintains that the adoption of the Common Confession, Part I 'involves an untruth and creates a basically untruthful situation . . . a settlement of past differences which are in fact not settled,' Wis. Syn. Proceedings, 1951, p. 147. The Missouri Synod should, therefore, 'repudiate its stand that the Common Confession is a settlement of the doctrines treated by the two committees (Mo.-ALC).' P. 147. This charge and this demand are based on the assumption that the Common Confession, Part I, is inadequate. Since, as we have shown, the inadequacy of the Common Confession, Part I, has not been proved, the charge falls and the demand cannot fairly be made." (P. 10.)

The heart of the Christian faith is the Scriptural doctrine of justification solely by grace through faith alone. Intimately related to it are the three Scriptural doctrines of objective justification, conversion, and election. Has *A Fraternal Word* actually shown that the Common Confession is adequate on these doctrines? At this time we shall consider only the first doctrine, objective justification.

Objective Justification as Professed by Missourians

Missouri's *Brief Statement* reads: "Scripture teaches that God has already declared the whole world to be righteous in Christ, Rom. 7, 19; 2 Cor. 5, 18-21; Rom. 4, 25; that therefore not for the sake of their good works, but without the works of the Law, by grace, for Christ's sake, He *justifies*, that is, *accounts* as righteous, all those who

believe in Christ, that is, believe, accept, and rely on, the fact that for Christ's sake their sins are forgiven." (Par. 17. Note especially the statement that God "has *already* declared the whole world to be righteous." Our emphasis.)

The Missouri Synod unanimously adopted the *Brief Statement* in 1932. In *The Pastor's Monthly* of May, 1933, Dr. R. Lenski said (undoubtedly in reference to the above-quoted words) that "2 Cor. 5, 18-20 is badly bungled by many, notably the Missourians." Commenting on this, Dr. Th. Engelder wrote in *Concordia Theological Monthly*, 1933, p. 508 as follows: "He (Dr. Lenski) is harking back to, and re-enacting, the days of 1888 to 1905. Those were the days when the Missourians . . . were charged with 'attempting the life of the Lutheran doctrine of justification,' with a 'fundamental error,' with 'teachings that imperil the salvation of men.' The Missourians did indeed teach that God, by pronouncing Christ, the world's Substitute, guilty of the sins of the world and condemning Him to death and then, in the resurrection, acquitting Him of all sin and guilt, thereby acquitted and absolved the whole world of its sin and guilt, John 1, 29; Rom. 4, 25; 5, 19; 2 Cor. 5, 14, 19, 21; 1 John 2, 2. And they teach it to this day. They would close their theological seminaries if they were no longer permitted to teach the objective justification. For then they could no longer teach the article of justification by faith. If the justification of the world, of every individual sinner, is not an accomplished fact, we should have to go out and ask the sinner to accomplish it himself. We could not ask him to receive his pardon as already issued. We could not ask him to 'believe,' to accept the pardon already granted and issued. Then there would be no justification 'by faith.' We cannot give up the article that on Easter morning God forgave every single sinner his sin and guilt." (Note the word "accomplished fact" and the twice repeated word "already.")

In other words, Missouri teaches that by raising Christ from the dead God *at that time already* forgave all men all their sins. "The resurrection of Christ is, as Holy Writ teaches, the actual absolution of the whole world of sinners. Rom. 4:5: 'Who was raised again for our justification.' At that time we were objectively declared free from sin." (Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, 1951, Vol. II, p. 348.) This forgiveness of sins is proclaimed and proffered to all men in the

Gospel. Whoever believes in Christ, that is, accepts the forgiveness offered to him in the Gospel, has forgiveness of sins.

It was not mere chance that in the Election and Conversion controversy of the last century the Scriptural doctrine of objective justification also became involved. As Dr. Pieper says *Op. cit.*, II, p. 556: "Synergism involves the denial of the objective reconciliation." A person who harbors false ideas concerning the conferring of faith will inevitably also err in respect to the place of faith in the doctrine of justification. He will regard faith, not merely as the receptive organ for apprehending the forgiveness of sins in the Gospel, but as a human performance upon which the realization of justification is contingent; as that in view of which, or on account of which, God justifies the sinner. Man must first believe and then God will impute Christ's righteousness to him and forgive him his sins. "Christ's righteousness is available for the entire world . . . The indispensable *condition* for the imputation of Christ's righteousness and for the subsumption under universal justification, is faith." (Reu, *Lutheran Dogmatics*, 1945 ed., p. 287f.)

The American Lutheran Church

In the 1938 *Declaration* of the American Lutheran Church justification is only incidentally mentioned in connection with election. "He purposes to justify those who have come to faith." These words leave room for the old error: first a man must believe and then his sins are forgiven — which is tantamount to rejecting objective justification. These words were therefore brought to the attention of the American Lutheran Church, which declared at Detroit in 1940: "Concerning the so-called objective, or universal, justification we state that we adhere to this doctrine without excluding, however, the declarative nature of the individual justification in the moment of faith of which the Scriptures speak so often." Commenting on this statement Missouri's Committee on Lutheran Union reported to the Fort Wayne convention in 1941: "On this action of the Detroit convention we wish to say that we regret that the statement does not include a definition of objective justification as was before the joint meeting of the two commissions and found mutually acceptable. "That God has already in Christ absolved all the world of its sins.' Furthermore, we cannot understand the purpose of referring in this connection to subjective justification, which was never a matter of controversy between

our bodies." (Missouri, *Proceedings*, 1941, p. 280.)

The Common Confession

On this matter the Common Confession reads: "By His redemptive work Christ is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world; hence, forgiveness of sin has been secured and provided for all men. (This is often spoken of as objective justification.) 'God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation,' II Cor. 5: 19. Hence no sinner need be eternally lost on account of his sins. God offers this propitiation and reconciliation freely to all men through His means of grace. There is nothing in sinful man or in what he may do to merit God's declaring him righteous. God justifies the sinner solely on the basis of Christ's righteousness, which He imputes to the sinner through the Gospel and which the sinner accepts by faith." (Part I, vi.)

Wisconsin's Critique

Commenting on these words the Wisconsin Synod said at New Ulm in 1951: "Any clear and correct presentation of this article requires not merely the inclusion of the term 'objective justification,' but a clear statement that in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ God has already declared every sinner righteous in His sight. For the non-imputation of the trespasses of the world (2 Cor. 5:19) is to be identified with the establishing of the public verdict of acquittal (*dikaioi katastathēsontai* — Rom. 5:19) upon those whose justification was revealed and proclaimed by the Resurrection of Christ (Rom. 4:25). This truth is impaired when the article states that forgiveness 'has been secured and provided for all men.' For this still leaves room for the thought that the justification of the sinner is not complete until the missing factor of personal (subjective) faith is supplied, a thought which is even suggested in the Article by its description as taking place on the basis of 'Christ's righteousness, which He imputes to the sinner through the Gospel and which the sinner accepts by faith.' Since this formulation admits of false answers to the question concerning the function of faith in justification, the article must be rejected." (Wis. *Proceedings*, 1951, p. 129.)

Putting Up A Straw Man

In attempting to meet the objections of the Wisconsin Synod *A Fraternal Word*

quotes the Wisconsin Synod as follows: "Any clear and correct presentation of this article requires a clear statement that in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ God has already declared every sinner righteous in His sight." (*A Fraternal Word* here fails to show in any manner that the underscoring of "declared" has been done by itself and not by the Wisconsin Synod.) Aside from other things, *A Fraternal Word* thus, by placing the emphasis *where it does not and cannot belong*, puts up a straw man, which it then proceeds to knock down.

After quoting the controverted statement from the Common Confession *A Fraternal Word* continues: "Article III states: 'God by raising Christ from the dead proclaimed to the world that He has accepted the atonement for man's sins as completed.'" Here, we say, *A Fraternal Word* has only succeeded in knocking down its own straw man. We rightly call this a straw man, because Missouri and its opponents have always agreed that the acceptance of the completed atonement was *proclaimed* by God to the world by raising Christ from the dead. As Reu puts it, *Lutheran Dogmatics*, 1945 ed., p. 279, "By raising Christ from the dead God declared that the sin of the world was covered by Christ's suffering and death."

The real point of issue in the doctrine of objective justification has always been this: Has forgiveness of sin merely been "secured and provided for all men" (the exact wording of the Common Confession Part I, vi) so that the justification of the sinner is not complete until the sinner believes, or, has God *already* declared the whole world righteous in Christ and absolved it of all its sins? But that issue is *not settled* by the statement cited by *A Fraternal Word*.

Part II of the Common Confession

Continuing, *A Fraternal Word* says: "Additional statement of Common Confession, Part II, Art. iii (3): 'The blessings of this ministry are meant for all races and conditions of men. From these blessings no one may be excluded, since no one is excluded from the forgiveness SPOKEN by God to the world in the death and resurrection of His Son Jesus Christ.'"

For a supposed settlement of past differences in the doctrine of objective justification we are here directed to an incidental statement of Part II of the Common Confession, which according to its Foreword is a statement "indicative of, and normative for, Chris-

tian life in our congregations and Synods." (Our emphasis.) Furthermore, here we are directed to an article entitled "The Church and Its Ministrations," in which we are told that the blessings of the Church's ministry are meant for all races and conditions of men and that no one is to be excluded from them. It has been rightly said that this is playing a "game of theological hide and seek." Yes, one is compelled in all sincerity to ask the question: Is this according to the spirit of Christ? If past differences have actually been settled, then why can this not be done in a clear, concise, and unequivocal manner, as Synod directed in 1947?

The statement cited by *A Fraternal Word* speaks of "the forgiveness SPOKEN by God to the world in the death and resurrection of His Son Jesus Christ." In this statement *A Fraternal Word* itself especially emphasizes the word "SPOKEN." This emphasis is of course in line with its own emphasis on the word "declared" in Wisconsin's statement and is part and parcel of its knocking down of its own straw man.

But do the words emphasized by *A Fraternal Word* actually meet the issue raised by Wisconsin? Do these words actually settle differences in the doctrine of objective justification?

The word "spoken" can be interpreted in a twofold manner. It may be interpreted to mean that the forgiveness *has been* spoken, or it may be interpreted to mean that forgiveness *is being* spoken by God to the world in the death and resurrection of Christ. It is contended that the word must be interpreted in the first sense, because the forgiveness is spoken *in the death and resurrection of Christ*, which death and resurrection occurred nineteen hundred years ago.

Now it is true, forgiveness *has been* spoken by God to the world in the *resurrection* of Christ. But who will contend and teach that forgiveness *has been spoken* by God in the *DEATH* of Christ? The obvious meaning of the words, that no one is to be excluded from the blessings of the Church's ministry, "since no one is excluded from the forgiveness spoken by God to the world in the death and resurrection of His Son Jesus Christ," is therefore no more than what is stated in Part I of the Common Confession, namely, that "forgiveness of sin has been secured and provided for all men" (in the death and resurrection of Christ) and that "God offers this propitiation and reconciliation freely to all men through the means of grace."

We are therefore compelled to state that neither Part I nor Part II of the Common Confession expressly confess the Scriptural doctrine of objective justification that God has already in Christ absolved the whole world of its sins.

Is This Doctrine So Important?

Dr. Pieper has well said (in *Christian Dogmatics*, 1951, Vol. II, p. 349): "The doctrine of the objective reconciliation is of vital importance to the entire Christian doctrine. Only by keeping this doctrine intact will the Christian doctrine remain intact. It will be irretrievably lost if this doctrine be abandoned. Maintain the teaching that mankind has been fully reconciled with God through Christ's obedience and suffering, and there will be no room left for the multiform error that man must himself effect his reconciliation with God in whole or in part. The religion of works, as taught by the rationalists, the Romanists, the Arminians, and the Modernists, will have no ground left to stand on. Discard this doctrine, and you will have to teach that men must supply the deficiency in Christ's work. You will then only have to determine the quantity and the external pattern of the work-righteousness you may deem necessary. Only on the basis of the objective, Christ-wrought reconciliation will Gospel and faith retain their Scriptural meaning, the Gospel being nothing else than the proclamation and offer of the forgiveness of sins purchased by Christ, and saving faith nothing else than the simple acceptance of this forgiveness. Where the objective reconciliation is denied, the Gospel can no longer be 'the Word of Reconciliation' (2 Cor. 5:19), 'the Word of His grace' (Acts 20:32), but is turned into a handbook of instructions how men may fully gain the grace of God by works which are their own product; the Gospel has *eo ipso* become Law. And faith is no longer the simple acceptance of the reconciliation which Christ has consummated, but is turned into a human accomplishment by which man fatuously hopes to secure the favor of God. Deny objective reconciliation, and you support the age-old heresy that faith is a meritorious work."

To this we would add that only the assurance: "God has in Christ forgiven you all your sins" can give true peace and consolation to the troubled and consciencestricken soul. But that truth is *not* confessed, but is in fact *compromised*, by the Common Confession in order to bring about an external

union between the Missouri Synod and the American Lutheran Church.

"He that hath My Word, let him speak My Word faithfully!" Jer. 23:28. D.

● Part II of the Common Confession Does Not Rectify the Shortcomings Of Part I

(Continued)

2. Conversion

Besides the difference in the fundamental article of the Holy Scriptures the difference regarding *sola gratia* (by grace alone) arrests our special attention. In the great controversy on conversion and predestination between the Synodical Conference on one side and Ohio-Iowa on the other *sola gratia* was the center of the conflict from the very beginning. Not as though the Iowa and Ohio Synods had openly denied *sola gratia*. No one can openly deny salvation by grace alone and still claim to be a Lutheran. But while the teaching of the Missouri Synod and her sister synods emphasized and confirmed the truth that we are saved by grace alone, the teaching of Iowa-Ohio practically impaired and invalidated *sola gratia*.

A Historical Survey of the Controversy In This Matter

As far as the doctrine of conversion is concerned, the state of controversy between the two contesting parties about eighty years ago stood thus: Missouri taught that the conversion of a sinful man to faith in Christ is *in every respect* a work of divine grace alone. The Holy Ghost calls the sinner out of spiritual death into spiritual life by creating faith in Christ in his heart without any cooperation on the part of natural man. As Christ raised dead Lazarus from the grave without any cooperation on his part, so natural man, who is spiritually dead, is converted and called to spiritual life without any assistance on his part, as Scripture says Eph. 2, 4.5: "But God, Who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together with Christ, (by grace are ye saved)." And v.8: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."

Ohio and Iowa declared the doctrine that the conversion of a sinner depends in every respect on the grace of God alone and in no respect on the conduct of man a Calvinistic

error. They accused Missouri of teaching an irresistible grace, as though God forced the sinner to believe, as Calvin taught. Therefore, in order to avoid Calvinism, they asserted that conversion and salvation in a certain respect did not depend on divine grace alone but also on the conduct of natural man. They explained their position in this manner: When the Holy Ghost approaches natural man in order to bring him to faith in Christ, man naturally resists the operation of the Holy Ghost. They called this conduct of sinful man "natural resistance." But while the Holy Spirit is active to overcome this resistance, natural man is inclined to intensify his resistance and thus to frustrate the effort of the Holy Spirit. This conduct they called "wilful resistance." The problem was, at that time, to explain how this wilful resistance is prevented or overcome in conversion. To say that the Holy Ghost overcomes it would, in their opinion, have been Calvinism; teaching an irresistible grace. To say that natural man can and must suppress his wilful resistance would be synergism; the error that natural man, before his conversion, has and can use spiritual powers. And still this wilful resistance must be omitted or overcome, or else man cannot be converted. Dr. Stelhorn used to present this solution of the difficulty: When the Holy Ghost approaches man with the Gospel He at the same time *offers* man strength to check or stop his wilful resistance. If man uses this strength he will be converted by grace alone, if he fails to use it he remains unconverted and is lost by his own fault.

But is not this the old synergistic teaching that unconverted man is said to possess spiritual faculties or powers and that all depends on the manner in which he uses these faculties? And does not this imply that a man who is still spiritually dead is able to use spiritual powers before he is raised from spiritual death? Would not this be a conversion before conversion? No, said Stelhorn, this was indeed true in the case of the synergists of the sixteenth century. They ascribed to natural man spiritual faculties with which he was able to operate. But not we. We teach that spiritual strength or faculties are *offered* to natural man, and with these powers *which are not yet inherent in him*, which are not yet his own, he is able to omit or to overcome his wilful resistance. And now all depends on the question: will he use those faculties which are offered him or not? In this sense, and in this sense *only*

we say that conversion and salvation do not depend in every respect on the grace of God alone but in a certain sense also on the conduct of man. Instead of offering Scriptural proof, which is lacking for this theory, Dr. Stelhörn decided: "Thus it *must* be if God's grace is to be a resistible grace."

For many years this theory was extolled as a masterpiece of theological thinking not only in the Ohio Synod but also by Iowans, as though it warded off Calvinism as well as synergism with one stroke. But in the course of time certain weak spots in this mode of teaching could not remain hidden. In the first place, how can natural man, who is spiritually dead and hostile to God, operate with powers which he does not yet possess? Can any man use powers which he does not yet have, which are only offered to him? And secondly, who causes the perverted will of natural man to use those powers? The Holy Ghost? This would, in the parlance of Ohio and Iowa, involve irresistible grace. Or does natural man himself change his perverted will? This would amount to cooperation of natural man with the Holy Ghost and hence synergism pure and simple. This was a dilemma out of which there was no escape. The sense in which it was said that conversion does not depend on God's grace alone but also on the conduct of man did not make sense.

Thus it happened that this phrase began to be criticized even within the Ohio Synod. At district conventions voices were raised asking if this phrase did not lay the Ohio Synod open to just criticism as though it denied *sola gratia*? Criticism entered even the *Theological Magazine*, an official publication of the Ohio Synod. In its September issue of 1913, p. 740, Dr. Mees, a coworker with Dr. Stelhörn, wrote: "A rather unfortunate and ambiguous expression is frequently quoted against Ohio which in controversy has become the very center of conflict i.e. that man's salvation does not depend solely on God's grace but in a certain sense also on human conduct, to which however, an intentionally perverted meaning is imparted by the constant inserting of the word 'good' before conduct. We have always deplored the expression and have never adopted it, deeming it both dangerous and useless. It is defensible only in the sense that the evil conduct of man over against the power of the Holy Spirit conveyed in the means of grace is the cause of man's damnation and hence the persistent rejection of grace the

cause of the loss of salvation." Dr. Stelhörn was shocked when he read this. He declared that this article was published without his knowledge. Had he seen the manuscript before it went to press, this article would not have appeared in the *Theological Magazine*. But now the stone had been set rolling and could not be stopped.

However, if Stelhörn's mode of presenting the matter was no longer fully satisfactory, a substitute for it had to be found. Dr. Mees had laid the finger on the sore spot, but his positive statements were rather nebulous. The gap which now yawned in the Ohioan system of teaching was filled by Dr. Lenski of the Ohio Synod while Dr. Geo. J. Fritschel rendered the same service to the Iowa Synod. The expediency which these men offered was essentially identical. The problem was to find a formula which on the one hand ascribed the conversion and salvation of man to the grace of God alone, so that *sola gratia* was safeguarded better than in Stelhörn's theory, but on the other hand to uphold the idea that the difference between natural and wilful resistance on the part of man somehow plays a part in the question of conversion or non-conversion, so that the different outcome of the Holy Spirit's effort, now as before, does not involve a mystery in God, but a mystery in the soul of man (a psychological mystery). This purpose was achieved by a ruse, the deception of which does not appear on the surface, but which is clearly seen when the new theory is carefully analyzed.

The main feature of the new mode of teaching lies in an altered conception of so-called wilful resistance. This conduct was now no longer defined as continued and intensified natural resistance, but as something entirely new, as a conduct basically different from natural resistance. The origin of natural resistance was, now as before, ascribed to the natural perversion of fallen man, as something unavoidable. But, it was added, divine grace is prepared for this kind of resistance. The Holy Ghost will overcome it through the means of grace *if another kind of obstacle is not thrown in the Holy Spirit's way which makes conversion impossible*. This obstacle which invariably prevents and frustrates conversion is said to be "wilful resistance." This resistance is insurmountable because it would require irresistible force to overcome it, and the Spirit of God does not work irresistibly, He does not force man to believe. It has never been satisfac-

torily defined wherein this mysterious wilful resistance is supposed to consist. The authors of the new theory contented themselves by declaring that wilful resistance is entirely different from natural resistance and that in every case where it is offered to the Holy Ghost it renders conversion impossible, because grace does not work irresistibly. Scriptural proof for the idea that there are two different kinds of resistance, one which the Holy Ghost overcomes and one which He never overcomes, is entirely lacking.

The advantage of this altered way of presenting the matter is twofold: For one thing, Iowans and Ohioans could now join Missourians in ascribing conversion and salvation in every respect to grace alone without any cooperation on the part of natural man. But they meant it in a different sense: The Holy Ghost, when approaching a sinner with the Gospel, overcomes *natural* resistance of man without any human cooperation. Man contributes nothing but opposition (natural resistance). And this the Holy Ghost is able to overcome without employing irresistible force. The stigma of infringing *sola gratia* in any way seemed thus removed. But at the same time the all-important distinction between natural and wilful resistance was saved. For they added: But as soon as man resists the Holy Ghost *wilfully* the work of the Holy Ghost stops, and hence man cannot be converted. This does not mean that one who has once resisted wilfully can never be converted. On the contrary, since it is supposed that nothing in man urges or forces him to this unnatural behavior, the Holy Ghost may approach him later and not find wilful, but only natural, resistance, which He will then overcome.

Thus on the one hand man was said to be converted by the grace of the Holy Ghost *alone*; on the other hand wilful resistance was given as the only cause of nonconversion, and Dr. Stellanor's favorite idea that *a different conduct of man must be the cause of the different result of the Holy Ghost's effort was safeguarded* without using Stellanor's precarious terminology. But the difference between Missouri and Iowa-Ohio remained the same: One side: Fallen man is by nature inclined to *every* evil conduct, even to wilful resistance against the Gospel. The other side: Fallen man is inclined to natural resistance, but not to wilful resistance. One side: The Holy Ghost is able to overcome wilful resistance without forcing man to believe. The other side: The Holy Ghost

can and does overcome natural resistance without using irresistible force, but never wilful resistance. One side: An answer to the question why one sinner perishes by his own fault while another *who is guilty of the same evil conduct* is converted and saved, is not given in Scripture and must therefore remain a mystery in this life. The other side: Some men are converted because the Holy Ghost overcomes their natural resistance; others remain unconverted because the Holy Ghost never overcomes wilful resistance. *It can therefore not be said that those who are converted and those who are not are equally guilty of the same evil conduct over against divine grace.* The mystery rather lies in the soul of man. The origin of wilful resistance is a psychological mystery.

It is absolutely necessary to know and understand the difference between the older and the present mode of teaching on the part of our opponents in order to see the various union documents which have been offered us in their proper light. At the time of the Chicago Theses our representatives were deceived because they did not know that the other side had changed its terminology but not its basic error. This change had never been dealt with in our publications. An article in which the whole matter was thoroughly treated and which was offered to *Lehre und Wehre* for publication could not be accepted by the editors on account of a gentlemen's agreement to the effect that all polemics should rest while official attempts were in progress in order to come to an understanding and to settle the difference. Hence our representatives were entirely taken by surprise when they heard Ohioans and Iowans using expressions which they had formerly denounced as Calvinistic; they heard them now ascribing the conversion of a sinner entirely and in every respect to the grace of God alone, and in no sense to the conduct of man. But they failed to see that in the altered mode of teaching the old difference was still hidden by reserving a faulty distinction between natural and wilful resistance. Therefore, when the theses on conversion were completed, our representatives really believed that the old difference had been settled. Similar mistakes were made in other doctrines, and the *Chicago Theses* were therefore justly rejected by the Missouri Synod. For (without entering now into those other differences) the presentation of the doctrine of conversion contained in the *Chicago Theses* was

only the old error in a new garb. After those theses had been rejected by the Missouri Synod, and there seemed to be no hope of ever reaching an agreement Dr. Geo. J. Fritschel frankly admitted in the Iowan *Kirchliche Zeitschrift* that the Chicago Theses were nothing other than the old Iowan doctrine set forth in a somewhat changed (Missourian) language. The difference in the doctrine of conversion remained.

The Common Confession on Conversion

What has the *Common Confession* to say about this difference? It says of Conversion in Ch. VII: The sinner's conversion takes place when God brings the contrite sinner to faith in Christ as his Savior. This change of heart with respect to sin, and the reliance upon Christ for salvation from sin is the work of God the Holy Ghost, without any cooperation whatsoever from sinful man. "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost," I Corinthians 12:3b. That is all. The added four Scripture texts leave the wording of the thesis just as it is. According to A.L.C. teaching the Holy Ghost certainly overcomes natural resistance on the part of man "without any cooperation whatsoever from sinful man." But what about the distinction between natural and wilful resistance? Is man by nature inclined to wilful resistance? Is the Holy Spirit able to overcome wilful resistance without employing irresistible power and *forcing* man to believe? Neither of these two questions are answered. According to the C.C. Missouri may continue to answer these questions with a decided "yes" while the A.L.C. may continue to answer them with a decided "no"! What Thesis VII says are two truths which the two parties may accept as self-evident, but not in the same sense. For while the A.L.C. means to say that the Holy Ghost overcomes natural resistance without any cooperation from man, the Missouri representatives meant to say that the Holy Ghost in creating faith overcomes every resistance on the part of man, be it called natural or wilful.

But wilful resistance which is not mentioned at all in chapter VII is mentioned in Ch. II. There it says of natural men that they wilfully continue to transgress God's holy Law in thoughts, words and deeds. Here the term "wilfully" occurs, but only in connection with the Law of God. Nothing is said here about the conduct of natural man toward the Gospel.

Is this defect amended in Part II? In chapter one of this part on *The Church's Mission* it says of fallen mankind that "without the gracious working of the Holy Spirit (it) is totally corrupt in trespasses and sins, is completely blinded to the will of God and wilfully resists every endeavor of God to save it from destruction." Now, "without the gracious working of the Holy Spirit" there of course really is no endeavor of God to save fallen mankind. But the meaning evidently is that without the working of the Holy Spirit man is totally blind in spiritual things and even hostile toward God, and when the Holy Spirit approaches man with the Gospel the blind world resists every endeavour of God to save it, even wilfully. Here at least wilful resistance on the part of natural man toward the Gospel is mentioned. But precisely what is said of this resistance? The fact is merely stated that the world, as long as it is not enlightened, wilfully resists the endeavour of the Holy Ghost to enlighten it with the Gospel. But A.L.C. men could hardly, according to their own principles, deny *this truth*. They declare wilful resistance, in distinction from natural resistance, *to be the only cause of non-conversion*. Hence it follows that all unconverted men, when they come in contact with the Gospel, actually resist the Gospel wilfully *unless they are converted*. And in that case they no longer belong to the blind world, but to the Church. Whoever teaches that natural resistance is always overcome by grace and that so-called wilful resistance is *the only cause of non-conversion* cannot consistently deny the conclusion that the blind world, as long as it *resists* the Gospel and hence remains unconverted, resists *wilfully*. The difference lies at an entirely different point. Is fallen man by nature *inclined* to this perverse conduct, or is the origin of wilful resistance a psychological mystery? Is the Holy Ghost able to overcome wilful resistance without using irresistible force? There is the rub. And since these questions are not answered in the C.C. it cannot truthfully be said that the C.C. settles the difference in the doctrine of conversion.

What A Fraternal Word Admits

This present article had been written thus far when *A Fraternal Word* came to hand — a document which deals with the exceptions which the Wisconsin Synod takes against the Common Confession. We

find that the reproof of our sister synod alleging that the untenable distinction between a natural and a wilful resistance is not rejected in the C.C. stands irrefuted by the *Fraternal Word*. Nor does it seem necessary to add anything to what is presented above except that one remark in that document requires special consideration.

The *Fraternal Word* to the Wisconsin Synod says p. 4: "Nowhere does the C.C. indicate a distinction between natural and wilful resistance, but speaks of wilful resistance only." This is true. But it is also true that the false distinction between natural and wilful resistance is that error in the doctrine of conversion which still separates us from the A.L.C. and which therefore is in need of correction. In a document which is meant to settle a doctrinal difference this difference must be *mentioned and clarified*. This is absolutely necessary. Or will any one of us delude himself by imagining that a difference in doctrine can be settled by passing it over in silence and carefully keeping on common ground? Certainly not. Therefore the words of the *Fraternal Word*, although they are evidently meant as a defense of the C.C. actually contain an admission that the difference in the doctrine of conversion is not mentioned in the *Common Confession*.

Therefore there is a ray of hope here. If the signers of the *Fraternal Word* will only be consistent and admit the fact that the difference in the doctrine of conversion is not settled in the *Common Confession* since it is not mentioned, this might be a first step toward a better mutual understanding and toward an eventual restoration of the former unity within the Synodical Conference.

J. B.

● Answering an Objection Regarding Confessional Statements

"Another modern objection to the *Formula* [of Concord] is that it binds the future generations to the *Book of Concord*. This charge is correct, for the *Formula* expressly states that its decisions are to be 'a public, definite testimony, not only for those now living, but also for our posterity, what is and should remain (*sei und bleiben solle — esseque perpetuo debeat*) the unanimous understanding and judgment of our churches in reference to the articles in controversy.' (587. 16.) However, the criticism implied in

the charge is unwarranted. For the Lutheran Confessions, as promoters, authors, and signers of the *Formula* were fully persuaded, are in perfect agreement with the eternal and unchangeable Word of God. As to the contents, therefore, they must always remain the confession of every Church which really is and would remain loyal to the Word of God." — F. Bente, *Historical Introductions to the Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, Concordia Triglotta*, p. 255.

● Correction

In the Nov., 1953, issue of our publication, p. 124, second column, the first sentence should read: Over against the position of our synod in this matter, the Presidium has declared its agreement with Dr. Arndt, who says that "in this matter we are faced with a question of interpretation which is not without its difficulties." We trust that the misprint which occurred in this sentence as it reads in the November issue did not cause our readers too much inconvenience.

● What Our Readers Say

"I just got to read the November issue of the *Confessional Lutheran*. The articles are superb. I am amazed how they all hit the mark in this battle for purity of doctrine in our midst. All who wish to know the truth — can have it. At our last conference . . . (an official) again made capital out of the fact that so few voted against the *Common Confession* at the convention, but it must always be remembered that they represent many thousands of sincere souls in our synod and beyond." — Pastor, New York.

"What you write is great. I can see more and more of our work coming to the surface, so may we never get discouraged." — Layman, Ill.

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THE "COMMON CONFSSION"
MUST BE REPUDIATED**